PAST & PRESENT

a journal of scientific history

HIC BREVE VIVITUR
A. R. Burn

THE RURAL SOCIOLOGY OF MEDIEVAL ENGLAND
G. C. Homans

THE REBUILDING OF RURAL ENGLAND, 1570-1640
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BRITAIN'S INFORMAL EMPIRE IN ARGENTINA, 1806-1914
H. S. Ferns

COMMUNICATION
Archibald Robertson

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EDITORIAL NOTE

After two years *Past and Present* is established. It is now assured of an adequate number of readers and of an abundance of contributions from historians of the highest repute. *Past and Present* began with slim numbers almost of pamphlet size. It can now expand to the volume of a normal learned periodical, with a proportionately greater diversity of contents.

It was greeted with whispered imputations of sectarianism and of tendencious bias. In fact its pages have been open to and filled by writers of all schools who have something new to say and a fresh approach. That was what its founders expected, and our confidence has been justified. There is a public that wants history treated like this; and scholars welcome the medium of expression which we offer.

So, with a treasury not too nearly bare and the editor's desk piled with valuable and stimulating articles, *Past and Present* is going to expand — experimentally. Our next issue, the first of our third year, will contain 96 pages in place of the previous 64. It will not only look fatter—it will contain more articles, deal with a wider range of theme, and appeal to more diverse interests.

But this expansion is experimental. To maintain it, we need more subscribers and still more contributors. The experience of the last two years gives us confidence that both will be forthcoming. So, though the increased size will cost more than our present income, we have invested in the experiment. For we believe that the subscriptions of new readers will make the expansion permanent. We hope indeed that they will suffice soon to justify a further expansion, a reduction in price, or both.

V. G. Childe
John Morris

for the Editorial Board.

Hic Breve Vivitur

A Study of the Expectation of Life in the Roman Empire.

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PREFACE

STUDENTS OF ROMAN INSCRIPTIONS MUST OFTEN HAVE BEEN STRUCK by the number of deaths of children and young people recorded on Roman tombstones. Without surprise, one notes that expectations of life in the Roman world must have been, by modern western standards, very low. It would obviously be of interest to know with some greater approach to exactitude how ancient mortality-rates did run, as well as how they varied between social classes, between town and country, or between the sexes. But amid all the uses that have been made of Roman inscriptions as historical material, this use has been curiously neglected, while the most ambitious attempt that has been made to exploit it hitherto is vitiated by failure to take elementary precautions to ensure that the " samples " studied are representative of any significant section of the population.[1] A sound though severe criticism of it and of most earlier work on

the subject will be found in the contribution of Professor W. F. Willcox, of Cornell University, to the *Actes du Congrès international de population* of Paris (1937),[2] which appears to be the only sound extant attempt to study the subject in general. More recently, however, some admirable work has been done, using all sources, on the expectation of life in one region of the ancient world, namely Greco-Roman Egypt, by Marcel Hombert and Mlle. Claire Préaux,[3] and it is gratifying to find that the results of their work, and of a pioneer study by Karl Pearson,[4] based only on the study of 141 mummies, are consistent with the conclusions reached in the following pages.

In what follows, I have been greatly helped by the work of my colleague Mr. H. H. O. Chalk and of my former pupil Mr. Martin Smith, now of Balliol College, Oxford, who devoted much time to searching the volumes of the Corpus devoted to Illyricum and to rural Italy, and collected and set in order the evidence from those areas; and also by Mr. G. E. M. de Ste Croix, of the London School of Economics, who assisted me to trace much of the modern material.

PART I. METHODS AND MATERIALS

1. *The Gaps in the Material*

One reason for the neglect, hitherto, of a potentially useful source of information, is no doubt the fact that it is *not* available in all parts even of the Latin-speaking half of the empire. In many regions the practice of putting the age of the deceased on tombstones was far from universal; and in Provence, for example, people tended, it seems, to give the ages of the old, with pride, and of the young as a pathetic detail, but frequently to omit those of the middle-aged. The figures which could be compiled for Narbonensis would therefore not be a genuine random sample.

In Italy, where it would be particularly interesting to be able to compare rural death-rates with that of the city of Rome, the chief obstacle is a different one: the widespread practice of preparing a tomb *vivus sibi et suis* — from the lavish mausoleum extending its builder's hospitality *libertis libertabusque suis*, and built often by one who was himself a freedman, to the little plot which Aelia Zosime " sibi comparavit se viva, longum ped. V, latum ped. II."* In these burial-places, the proprietor usually also composed his epitaph *sibi vivus*, and his age at death was not usually added — not always, even when he had added the words *vixit annis*, and left a space for the figures. But more often the builder of a tomb *sibi vivus* did not trouble about his age. To give one's age was not, indeed, a regular practice of the Roman or Romanised governing classes, as one

* " bought in her lifetime, five feet by two."

may see from many epitaphs, both under the Republic and under the Empire. The ages which one does find given in vast numbers in the cemeteries of imperial Rome are predominantly those of children who predeceased their parents; and though some ages of older people are given, a count of any sizable group (say, the Aelii or the Flavii) will show that, in proportion to those whom we hear of as parents of adult sons and daughters or as partners in many years of married life, those whose ages are given are far too few.

Also, it becomes evident beyond doubt that in the absence of any registration of births most people, or at least most of the middle-aged and older, were vague about their exact ages. In the army, of course, records were kept at least of one's length of service, and the troops, deeply suspicious (like the men on the Rhine in Tacitus' *Annals*) that if one did not look after one's own interests the Army would keep one on longer than it had the right to, no doubt kept count of the years. (Was this the origin of the habit of keeping a tally of one's age and length of service, which, as we shall see hereinafter, seems to have been commonest precisely in Roman military areas, and among the slaves of the civil service?) But even so, far too many tombstones for chance give ages ending, as we shall see later, in 0 or 5, and after the age of 75 almost all end in 0. This vagueness produces a further complication for the would-be demographer, in that it leaves the field free for the general exaggeration of their ages by old people, which undoubtedly leaves its mark on the latter ends of our graphs. In like manner, Willcox notes that among Negro decedents in the United States alleged centenarians are nine times more numerous than among the whites, although the general health and mortality of the coloured population is much worse than the white.

A further gap in our material appears, even in those regions and among those classes who regularly give ages, in the under-representation of young children and especially of infants. It is possible to speak confidently of such under-representation, i.e. of evidence which is *not* given, for the reason that all modern experience shows that adult death-rates and infant death-rates always vary together; that is to say, that high infant death-rates and high adult death-rates occur together, as do low infant death-rates and low adult death-rates. Dr. William Farr, who compiled the first British life-tables on the basis of the census material of 1841, was at pains to establish this point against those adherents of *laissez-faire* who maintained that any action which reduced infant mortality would only produce a crop of sickly children and adults, and would be "compensated" by higher death-rates at later ages. It can be checked from any reliable collection of life-tables. At some ancient cemeteries, indeed, an enormous proportion of infant interments

has been discovered,[5] and this is what would be expected among populations with such high death-rates among young and middle-aged *adults* as are revealed by our Roman tombstones; but the materials for actual statistics of infant mortality in the regions and periods with which we are here dealing do not appear to be available. We are compelled to infer, however, that infants were very rarely given tombstones; and it is reasonable to extrapolate, when one has compiled life-tables for those reaching adult life in some ancient social groups, figures for child and infant mortality similar to those of populations showing equally low adult expectation of life in the modern world, where such have been discovered.

2. *Geographical Distribution of the Material*

Recognizing the existence of these gaps in our material, we now turn to the study of those regions and groups in which the custom of giving ages was prevalent.

The distribution of these regions is curious. They lie in a broken circle along the periphery of the Latin world, in a manner which might suggest that the imperial army and civil service was responsible for spreading the custom. Africa is our richest quarry of material. In Europe, with its denser populations in more recent times, far more stones may be presumed to have perished or to lie undiscoverable beneath our towns. Britain produces less than two hundred " specimens " in all, though the number of tombstones without ages is much smaller still. The Rhineland produces legionary tombstones, but few of women or children or old people. From Upper Germany, the *C.I.L.* (XIII.2.ii, nos. 5001-7775) gives 260 tombstones of men from 18 to 50 years old, the great majority of them soldiers (including a dozen stones which do not give ages, but give the number of *stipendia*); but only 33 of boys unde 18, 29 of men over 50, and 60, including 12 Christian stones of the late empire, of women and girls of all ages (15 under 17, and only 7 over 40). Lower Germany, as is well known, is relatively poor in inscriptions, no doubt owing to poverty in good local stone, which put a premium on Roman stones as building material. The conclusion to be drawn is presumably that in the period to which most of these stones belong, that is the early empire, the troops on the Rhine did not as a rule marry and settle locally after retirement, but returned to the more agreeable climates of their homes, often in Spain or Provence, where numerous tombstones of Rhine Army veterans have been found. Germany thus has to be added to the list of regions from which we cannot get a representative random sample.

The Danube provinces, on the other hand, produce the best material for this purpose which I have discovered outside Africa. Raetia and the parts of Noricum adjacent to it and to Italy follow the

procedure of Italy, and have been drawn blank; but north-eastern Noricum, Pannonia and Dacia, like Africa, Germany and Britain, regularly give ages; though, as may be seen from the appended tables most people there were considerably vaguer about their ages than most people in Africa.

Finally, fortified by the discovery that the alleged ages of 1,260 individuals from the Danube lands and Noricum and of over 3,000 from Africa give results which are consistent in different areas and appear reasonable in the light of the experience of modern demographers, we can turn back to inspect certain smaller groups, where the small size of the sample would compel us to treat any results with great reserve if they stood alone. The figures for Britain, based on the ages of a mere 150 adults and 40 children, appear worthy of a little more respect when found reasonably consistent with other results, based on larger samples ; and even within the areas previously drawn blank, it is possible to identify some groups, giving " samples " comparable in size to that provided by Britain. We have identified four — one in Spain, one around Bordeaux, and two in Italy; and further inspection might, no doubt, reveal others. Our group from Spain covers the *conventus* of Emerita, in Lusitania, whose centre, one notices, was a military colony; though on the outskirts even of this area, round Talavera, the number of tombstones without ages begins to rise significantly. In Italy, Mr. Chalk found a similar though smaller group round Brundisium; and in Cisalpine Gaul the rather curious fact emerges, that though under the early empire people did not generally give the age of the deceased, under the Christian Empire, after the third century development of North Italy as a military area, they did.

3. *Distribution in Time*: *the Pagan Empire and Christian Empire*

This gives us our best opportunity of comparing the mortality and vitality of the tombstone-erecting classes in different periods. It is by no means always possible to date a Roman gravestone; but practically all professedly and evidently Christian stones must be of the Constantinian age or later, while pagan stones are not only predominantly earlier, but predominantly *much* earlier. As is well known, the first two centuries of our era were the great age of literacy and of stone-cutting, — especially the Flavian-to-Antonine era; whereas after the early third century, the chaos and impoverishment are reflected in the much smaller number of surviving inscriptions of any kind. The separate classification of Christian stones — when we can get enough of them — therefore gives a basis for a rough but useful comparison between the *haut-empire* and the *bas-empire*. We have collected two sizable groups of Christian ages at death — those, namely, recorded for Africa and for North Italy; and it is interesting

to find that *among those who could afford tombstones* the expectation of life, reckoned from the age of 15, does show an increase. (It is, of course, important to remember that under the late empire the proportion of those who could not or did not afford tombstones was very much larger). Reckoning from age 10 as a base-line, as I have done in compiling the graphs, this position is masked by the fact that the Christians appear to have set up proportionately more tombstones to children between 10 and 15; an interesting if not surprising variation in social practice. Only when we come to the very old does the Christian population show either less longevity, or, as one may suspect, less of a propensity to exaggeration.

It would not, it should be noted, be sound practice simply to record *all* ages from early Christian stones for the whole empire, since small local groups often contain a higher than average proportion of bishops and other church dignitaries, and are therefore weighted in favour of the more advanced ages; though on the other hand such records as that of a *lector* from Ammaedara in southern Tunisia, aged five (C.VIII, no. 453), remind us that not all church officials were always of mature years.

4. *What Social Classes are Represented?*

One of the chief questions, which one naturally has in mind during such a research as this, is that of differential mortality as between social classes and occupations. Figures from tombstones naturally do not represent those who could not afford tombstones; and this raises the fundamental question, what classes *are* represented.

The answer to this question is fortunately not in doubt. Tombstones with ages were an essentially middle-class and lower-middle-class institution. The governing classes, as we saw, having many more interesting things to say about themselves and their relatives, generally did not give ages; the really poor could not afford tombstones. Tombstones also tend to be an urban institution. Many *coloni* doubtless were too poor, and many peasants too illiterate; but even the owners of the wealthy (but mostly late) villas of Britain, for example, did not set up these monuments on their estates. If a landowner did put up a monument, he seems generally to have put it near the town, where people could see it. As Cicero said when planning Tullia's monument, *Sequor celebritatem* (*Ad Att.* XII, 27, 1, cf. 19, 1). The most assiduous givers of ages are the legionaries, with a high proportion of centurions and NCOs, whose executors had more money to spend. Somewhat less numerous are the tombstones of auxiliaries, who had less money; and then, producing in the aggregate something like the same amount of material as the soldiers and their dependents, come the Romanised civil populations of the regions under discussion.

PART II. RESULTS

5. *General Mortality and the Social Classes*

Amid this civil population it is not usually possible to give statistics for different occupations. Inscriptions naming a man's trade are, in all regions, too few for statistical use. Nor, for the most part, does anything interesting emerge from such figures for different classes as we have. I have catalogued separately the tombstones of auxiliaries, legionaries, NCOs, centurions and higher officers, and also of decurions of townships, other local grandees and their families (e.g. those buried in large mausoleums), ordinary citizens, bearers of barbarian names, freedmen when distinguishable, and slaves; but the resulting groups are too small and the number of individuals whose classification is uncertain too large to give interesting results. Clearly in all classes most people died in middle-age or earlier, and many as children; but we knew that from the literary evidence. We knew, for example, that the two Gracchi and their sister were the only survivors out of ten children; that Agricola lost two sons in infancy, though a daughter survived; and that the number of imperial princes and princesses and cadets of the Cæsars who died young is great enough to bulk large in Roman history. What Roman lawyers and officials thought of the chances of life among the propertied classes is shown by a passage of Ulpian, quoted by Aemilius Macer in the *Digest* (Book XXXV, chap. 2, § 68) dealing with the official Treasury computation of the value of a life-interest, for purposes of calculating succession-duty. Expectation of life was reckoned to be (I translate):

" From infancy to age 20,	..	30 years;
„ age 20 „ „ 25,	..	28 „
„ „ 25 „ „ 30,	..	25 „
„ „ 30 „ „ 35,	..	22 „
„ „ 35 „ „ 40,	..	20 „
„ „ 40 „ „ 50,	the difference from 60, minus 1;	
„ „ 50 „ „ 55,	..	9 years;
„ „ 55 „ „ 60,	..	7 „
and at any age above 60,	..	5 „

It does not appear, however, as though whatever statistical calculations underlay this table can have been very detailed, exact or scientific, or the discovery would surely have been made that the expectation of life of an infant was much less than that of a child of 10. It may also be presumed that the Treasury figures, computed as a basis for levying taxation, would not err on the side of pessimism. (See further the article by M. Greenwood, " A Statistical Mare's Nest?" in the *Journal of the Royal Society*, 1940). Well indeed might the young Sulla, when going on Very Special Service, exclaim,

" Why should one not risk one's life, when one may soon lose it by sickness anyhow?" (Sall. *Jug.*, 106).

6. *Slaves and Citizens in Africa*

But there is one case where we can compare a large and homogeneous group of slaves and freedmen both with the main body of the civil population in the same province and with the population of a legionary cantonment and its *canabae*. This opportunity arises in Africa, where, as may be seen from the first three double-columns of my tables, we can compare large samples (*a*) of the pre-Constantinian general population in the most civilised regions — chiefly Roman citizens, with a handful of slaves and non-citizen natives; (*b*) (col. 3) of the men and women of the great cantonment of Lambaesis, and (*c*) (col. 2) of " Cæsar's Household " at Carthage — that is to say the " clerical and sub-clerical grades," as Professor A. H. M. Jones reminds us, of the imperial civil service for Africa. A coin-series running from Augustus down to T. Antoninus Cos. IV (27 B.C.-146 A.D.) indicates that their two cemeteries of cremation-burials were filled and closed by the mid-second century.

As slaves went, these men and women were well placed. They had their family life, their personal property, their *collegia*, or voluntary contributory schemes for funeral insurance. They did not, at least if they remained slaves, have to worry about old age, in the rather unlikely event of their reaching it. The state — " Cæsar's Household " — would look after that. Incidentally the fact that some fifteen old men buried here had lived on *as slaves* to be over 80, and two, allegedly, to be 100, is quotable at least in refutation of the vulgar error that all worn-out slaves in the Roman Empire were fed to the goldfish. The occupants of these cemeteries describe themselves and their relations as *Aug. lib.* or *Aug. verna* with complacency or even pride. To the criminals or prisoners of war in the mines and quarries, or even to many a field-hand, their lot must have appeared heavenly. But their death-rates, especially when compared with those of soldiers and citizens in Africa in the same period, or with even the grimmest available twentieth- or nineteenth-century life tables, are horrifying. The general citizen population of the old proconsular province had the best expectation of life which I have discovered in the Roman Empire, comparing not unfavourably with India at the beginning of this century, with Chinese farmers or Egyptian fellahin in the 1930s, or with the worst slum districts of Victorian Britain. The slaves and freedmen of the civil service at Carthage had the worst. What the conditions among the " forgotten men " in the mines and quarries must have been like, one scarcely likes to think.

I have not reproduced here the separate figures for slaves and freedmen or freedwomen in " Cæsar's Household," since they are

(obviously) not separate groups but, so to speak, the same people at different times of life. One fact of some interest emerges, however. Of 62 women over 40 years old, whose status is certain (some are uncertain, usually through damage to the stone), 40 are free and only 22 remain as slaves; while of 90 men, 40 are free and 50 are still slaves. Apparently fewer women were content to remain slaves, and their efforts to obtain manumission, or to stimulate their husbands to do so, were greater than those of the men when left to themselves. This is likely enough. The implications of slavery were more unpleasant for a woman than for a man.

7. *Soldiers and Civilians*

The figures from Lambaesis and from the Danube provinces show the only other trace of a differential occupational mortality which I have been able to trace. Soldiers at Lambaesis, up to about the age of 42, have a slightly but definitely better expectation of life than the local civilians. This is not unnatural, since the army presumably required good physique and apparent health in its recruits. But at the age of 42 the lines of the graphs for soldiers and civilians cross, and thereafter the survival-rate for soldiers and veterans sinks slowly but steadily further below the civilian rate. At these ages deaths in battle can have little to do with the matter; but the shortening of lives by the after-affects of wounds and injuries would; and in general it would appear that the Roman Army had — as one would, indeed, expect from the soldiers' complaints in Tacitus (*Annals*, I, 17) — considerable success in squeezing the best out of its men before getting rid of them. In the Danube provinces, with more numerous battle casualties, the two lines cross at about age 30 (see tables). One must allow for the fact that in these military districts the ranks of the veterans may have been thinned out by retirement of some to other areas after completion of service; but on the other hand we find that some veterans retired *to* these areas after service elsewhere. Also, the higher mortality among ex-soldiers continues to be noticeable at ages over 70, when, if a veteran had intended to make a move, he would in the vast majority of cases have made it long since.

8. *Male and Female Mortality*

But the most striking — one might almost say sensational — discovery emerging from these figures is that of the differential death-rate of men and women. Among those reaching adolescence, the difference in expectation of life in practically all groups represented is greater for men than for women, usually by five years or more — which is much, in a world in which only a minority even of men survived middle age. Moreover, considerably fewer women got

tombstones at all; fewer in the ratio of about 5:4 among soldiers and citizens in Africa, 2:1 in Britain and Pannonia. Those women who did have tombstones, then, must be assumed to have been chiefly women whose families were in easy circumstances, and who were remembered with affection and regret; not that a man's being keenly sorry for his wife's death is entirely incompatible with his having given her a hard time when alive.

It has been asked by some critics whether older women may not have been relatively more numerous among those who found no one to set up a tombstone to them. They *may;* and if so, it would follow that fuller figures for old women and for children would produce comparative figures for the sexes, in a complete life-table, more like those to which we are accustomed. But the evidence for the heavy mortality among younger women is not merely a matter of percentages; it is direct. In Africa, for example, even out of the smaller numbers of women recorded, the *recorded crude aggregates* of those dying between the ages of 12 and 37 will be found, on reference to the attached tables, approximately equal to those of the men.

On this point, too, we can say on direct evidence that what was true in many outlying districts was also true at Rome. In spite of the absence of ages on many stones, we can count stones set up by wives to deceased husbands and by husbands to deceased wives; and in spite of the facts that we have fewer stones for women than for men in the aggregate, and that wives were usually considerably the younger, deceased wives predominate. In the compact second-to-third-century group presented by the Aelii, for example (CIL. VI, 10609-11004), 68 wives are buried by their husbands, but only 41 husbands by their wives.

These results are so surprising to one familiar with the greater average longevity of women in modern western nations that at first sight one has difficulty in crediting them. Willcox, indeed, does not credit them, and consequently refrains from giving separate figures for the sexes; though this disbelief in the validity of the figures for males and females separately does not deter him from treating them as valid when added together.

The situation revealed is, however, not unparalleled among modern populations — not even among certain groups in Great Britain. In Egypt, indeed, the figures for 1927-37 cited by C. V. Kiser[6] show it at all ages from 10 to 50. In India and Japan, according to the *League of Nations Statistical Year-Book*, 1940-41, female death-rates were consistently higher than male at all ages from 15 to 40, rising to as much as 32% higher in India between the ages of 20 and 30. (These figures were corrected down to 1938). Chile showed an excess in the female death-rate between 10 and 35, especially

between 15 and 20; and among European states, Bulgaria showed a similar excess at all ages from 1 (i.e. excluding the infant death-rate) to 40, rising as high as 25% above the male between 20 and 25. Greece showed an excess of over 10% in the age groups 25-35; and Ireland, Poland and Hungary showed similar but smaller excesses. So did, more surprisingly, Denmark, Holland and Canada, all three having death-rates for both sexes among the lowest in the world, but the female being slightly the higher between 25 and 45. In Great Britain, according to the *Report on Occupational Mortality* of the Registrar-General for England and Wales based on the Census of 1931, a similar excess was shown in the mortality of miners' wives under the age of 35 over the mortality of their husbands, *including deaths from accidents*. From 35 to 45 the death-rates of the wives were slightly lower than those of their husbands from all causes, but remained higher than the men's death-rate with accidents excluded.

There is no mystery about the reasons for this. The " dangerous age " for women shown above coincides more or less with the reproductive period, though where the female excess death-rate starts earlier, we must also presume that the better feeding and nurture of boys than of girls during childhood, which is certainly widespread, plays a part. To quote the valuable study of Mrs. C. M. Burns,[7] " Almost up to the end of the reproductive period, it is more dangerous to be a miner's wife than a miner." Actual deaths in childbed play a smaller part in producing this result than general exhaustion. One may compare an observation of the Census Commissioner for Travancore, quoted in the *Census of India Report* for 1931 (p. 93):

(Commoner than the death of young mothers in childbirth) " is the death of women in the later period of maturity, say between the years of 20 and 30, brought on by the physical exhaustion, the nervous breakdown and other ailments, which are the aftermath of premature childbearing." To quote Mrs. Burns again (*op. cit.*, p. 186): " The high death-rate among women under primitive conditions need call for little comment. At no other stage, either in nature or in agriculture, has any species been made to attempt what primitive mankind has always essayed, that is to combine in one organism the functions of the milk-cow and the draught ox."

Girls in the Roman Empire were, indeed, normally married, by our standards, prematurely. Statistical evidence of this is not plentiful, but suffices, and is consistent with what one would gather from literature. Tombstones showing both age at death and duration of marriage, and thus revealing age when married, are rather rare; but W. R. Macdonell[8] succeeded in collecting 59, from Spain, Africa and the city of Rome. Of these 59 women, 32 were married at ages evenly spaced between 12 and 17, and 15 between 17 and 22. Seven

marriages spaced out between 24 and 33, like one at 56, were presumably not first marriages; while three at age 10 and one at 7, if we may trust the stone, should, one may hope, be classed rather as betrothals; but betrothals obviously with an early marriage in prospect. We have also a considerable number of stones, chiefly from Lambaesis and elsewhere in Africa, which record women in their twenties being buried by, and so presumably living with, their parents; but since many young men also died, a high proportion of these are no doubt widows.

After about 40-45, it is interesting to see, the expectations of life of such women as survive improve, according to our evidence, relatively to the male, and even, in some of the worst groups, for a few years absolutely. One is reminded forcibly of what one may still see among Greek peasant communities, where the pinched and haggard faces of the not-yet-old women, overworked and overburdened, contrast with the bright eyes and evident vitality of many of the old " grannies," who, having survived their troubles, probably enjoy an expectation of life greater than that of men of the same age.

There is, therefore, no reason for hesitation over accepting the evidence of a very heavy female mortality at reproductive ages under the Empire. Modern parallels are not lacking; Roman bourgeois society merely resembled, in this respect, the society of Japan in the 1930's or of a British mining village, more closely than British or American bourgeois society. Even in a society having a very low death-rate for both sexes, as in Denmark, Holland and Canada, deaths caused directly or indirectly by maternity may — male deaths having been greatly reduced — suffice to produce a slight female excess death-rate. In tables showing expectation of life at birth, however, or numbers of survivors per thousand live births at different ages, this mortality is masked by effects of the much greater male infant mortality (under all except the most modern western conditions) as well as by the greater longevity of women after middle-age; and it is presumable that if we had any presentable figures for Roman infant mortality the total results would have been less surprising to Professor Willcox. It must further be noticed that our League of Nations figures refer only to societies capable of collecting reliable figures, and willing to publish them; it remains quite uncertain what worse figures might be collected in other areas by such a study as that organised by Chi-ming Chiao, with the aid of the Milbank Memorial Fund, among Chinese peasants in 1929-1931.[9]

I looked with interest to see whether under the Christian Empire there was any sign of a closing of the gap between the mortality figures of the sexes; but the answer is quite definite, and is negative.

9. *Infant and Juvenile Mortality*

To complete our picture, it would be necessary to extrapolate — since sufficient direct evidence is lacking — figures for infant and juvenile mortality. I have not done this in the attached graphs, preferring to compare with one another life-tables for which we have positive evidence. It would not, however, be unjustifiable to extrapolate *estimates* of mortality at the earlier ages, since modern experience goes to show, as we have already noticed, that when mortality rates rise or fall, they generally do so at all ages together. In the present state of our knowledge there is room, inevitably, for a considerable margin of error. For example, Chile in 1932 — the only Latin-American country to publish infant mortality statistics — showed a loss of 241 per 1,000 male infants, and 226 per 1,000 female; but its adult vitality was considerably better than that of India, where the infant mortality was lower (184 and 167 per 1,000, respectively, in 1932, 176 and 158 in 1938). In the India of 1901-10, where the adult vitality and mortality were not unlike those of the citizen population in Roman Africa, the figures were 249 (male) and 233 (female). In Victorian Britain in the 1860's, the large burghs of Scotland showed a loss of 234 per 1,000 males and 189 per 1,000 females; Liverpool reported 230 per 1,000, taking both sexes together.

It seems therefore not unlikely that among the relatively healthy free Romanised population of Africa, whose adult mortality approximated to that of rural China, early twentieth-century India, or a Victorian slum, the infant mortality also approximated and was of the order perhaps of 200 to 250 per 1,000; while on the Danube frontier or among the slaves at Carthage, whose adult mortality (and also their *reported* child mortality) was so much heavier, the infant mortality was also proportionately worse.

10. *A Summary of Results*

The easiest way of comparing life-tables is by graphic representation, and to the subjoined graphs reference is hereby made. For comparative figures, however, which can be taken in one's stride and kept in one's head, it may be found convenient to take for all our groups and for both sexes, the ages at which there survive one half (A) of those alive at the age of 15, and (B) of those alive at the age of 42. I take the age of 42 rather than 40, on account of the fact that, through vagueness about exact ages, an excessive number of individuals are reported to have died at exactly 40 — the round number. These are not, it must be noted, " expectation of life " figures, which cannot be accurately computed from our data, on account of the palpable exaggeration of the ages of many of the very

old. Africa, excepting Egypt and the no doubt pestilential city of Carthage, appears to have been much healthier than Europe, with its severer winters. The Danube frontier provinces and Britain look noticeably bad; but it is likely that the figures are at least slightly affected by the tendency of first-century and early second-century soldiers to retire, as veterans, to their homes, often in Spain or Provence, as some tombstones in those areas testify.

TABLE I

Probable Duration of Life

	Of those reaching the age of 15, in the groups shown below, one-half reach the following ages:—		*Of those reaching the age of 42, in the same groups, one-half reach the following ages:—*	
	Males.	*Females.*	*Males.*	*Females.*
I. AFRICAN PROVINCES:				
(*a*) Civil districts, N.W. Africa; chiefly citizen population	48	44	69	67
(*b*) Carthage: slaves and freedmen of "Cæsar's Household"	38	33	62	60
(*c*) Lambaesis: Cantonment and district	45	38	61	61
(*d*) Egypt (after Hombert and Préaux); all classes; sexes not distinguished	36		56	
(*e*) N. African provinces excepting Egypt; Christian tombstones (4th to 6th cent.)	52	47	68	68
II. EUROPE:				
(*a*) Southern (average of groups from Bordeaux, Brindisi and Merida, with their districts)	44	36	59	54
(*b*) Danube provinces (average of groups from Noricum, Upper and Lower Pannonia, and Dacia)	40	33	60	58
(*c*) Britain (N.B.: small sample). Chiefly military districts	40	37	52	55
(*d*) N. Italy: Christian period	52	40	64	57
III. MODERN FIGURES, for comparison:				
(*a*) India (Census of 1931)	48	43	59	59
(*b*) Egypt, 1927-37 (after Kiser)	51	49	64	63
(*c*) England and Wales (conditions of 1946-7)	72	76	73	77

IV. COMPARISON of men reaching age 17 and joining or not joining the Roman Army. Half reach the following ages:

Where buried:	*Soldiers:*	*Civilians:*
(*a*) at Lambaesis	44	48
(*b*) in Danube provinces	40	47
Of those alive at 42 in same categories, half reach:		
(*a*) at Lambaesis	57	69
(*b*) in Danube provinces	58	60

PART III. A SPECULATIVE CONCLUSION

It is well-known that a conspicuous feature of the decline of the Empire was a fall in population, at least over wide areas. When the cities of Gaul fortified themselves against the renewed German invasions, they took in sometimes barely a quarter, sometimes no more than an eighth of the first-century area. In the east, the new walls of Athens tell the same tale. Nor was the phenomenon confined to the towns; while the empire was still powerful, M. Aurelius began the process of controlled settlement of eastern Europeans both south of the Danube and in Britain; a process which, continuing for centuries with always more settlement and less control, forms no small part of the barbarian migrations. In short, there was room to spare within the empire, at a time when the barbarian world was ready to pour out a surplus population. Literary evidence — that of Pliny's Letters, that of Juvenal, that concerning the would-be eugenic legislation of Augustus — referring to the senatorial class at Rome, shows a declining birth-rate, attributed by contemporaries largely to deliberate selfishness (though this was not the reason in Pliny's own case); and in the absence of other evidence it has sometimes been supposed that this was the common cause of the general depopulation. But there is some reason to think that it was, at any rate, not the only cause.

In the search for modern life-tables likely to give illuminating material for comparison with our figures from Roman tombstones, the chief difficulty is that in most countries accurate figures begin to be collected only at a time when modern medicine and hygiene have begun, at least in parts of each area, to increase the average length of life. One region, however, for which we have reliable statistics concerning a population living under primitive conditions in a northern climate, consists of the Scottish Islands in the mid-nineteenth century; and here, in the Registrar-General's *Supplement* for the years 1861-70, we find a remarkable fact. Even when the maximum allowance has been made for migration from the islands to the mainland and from the country to the towns — an important factor, and one which unfortunately we cannot precisely measure — it remains evident that length of life was on the average considerably greater, not only than that of the urban but even than that of the rural mainland population, much of which was concentrated in such good farming districts as Ayrshire, Lothian and Buchan.

The fact was unexpected, at least by the present writer; but the reason for it is not far to seek. People do not die of primitive conditions as such, or the human race would not have survived; nor do they die of slum conditions as such; they die, when they do die in youth or middle age, chiefly of specific infections, virus-borne

or germ-borne, for which dirt and under-nourishment provide favourable conditions. Life on the land in the mid-nineteenth century was harder and less attractive than life in a Victorian slum; had it not been so, there would have been a movement back to the land by those who knew both; but life on the land was healthier, and *especially* life in the Islands, despite the astonishingly primitive conditions to which many writers bear witness. But what made the Islands healthier than even the rural mainland (embracing both highland crofts and lowland farms) was surely the fact that they were relatively isolated. Human epidemics travel chiefly by human lines of communication.

Similarly with the Roman Empire: life in the barbarian world was was no doubt less attractive than life in western or southern Europe; but we should be rash to infer that it was shorter *on the average*. Roman hygiene was not to be despised; civilised Romans were notably clean people. But one has to remember that our figures are compiled from groups of gravestones, mostly undatable, so that the groups spread at least over generations and usually over centuries, and that during these periods repeated epidemics alternated with healthy periods. The constant movement of army drafts, traders and other travellers, in the Roman world naturally facilitated the spread not only of ideas but of whatever infectious diseases were in circulation; and in the heavy mortality which we find to have existed among relatively young people, especially among slaves, soldiers, and women of all classes, it may be suggested that we have an important contributory cause of the Decline and Fall.

PART IV. INTRODUCTION TO THE TABLES

In the following tables, which are not so much an appendix to the foregoing article as the text, on which the article is a commentary, I give the numbers of individuals in each " sample " who were living at ages 0, 1, 5, 10, for comparison with modern life-tables (it will be found clear beyond doubt that the early ages are greatly under-represented) and thereafter those for ages 17, 22, 27, 32, 37, and 42, since these seem best to " smooth out " the irregularities produced by vagueness as to their exact ages, especially among European provincials, and a consequent over-representation of numbers ending in 5 or 0. At ages over 40, even this measure is insufficient to eliminate all irregularities, and I give only the figures for ages 52, 62, etc. On these tables are based the graphs, the part of this work from which readers can most easily form their own conclusions. From them may be computed also figures of expectation of life among those reaching adolescence; a concept familiar to the modern reader, but less useful to the historian than to insurance companies. In compiling these tables I have made no use of stones which, through mutilation, do

not show the sex of the deceased. I have, on the other hand, used a few stones where the numerals are mutilated at the latter end, and where only the figure V or a smaller number can be missing. In such cases I have restored, uniformly, a figure half-way between the maximum and minimum possible.

As regards vagueness about ages, it should be noted that it is by no means unknown even in modern Britain; it was remarked by the Government Actuary for England and Wales that the census figures for 1931 " reveal a partiality for the ages ending in 0 and 8, whilst those ending in digits 1, 7, and 9 appear to be less favoured." In India, Dr. J. H. Hutton, in his Report on the Census of the same year (Delhi, 1933), notes that " ignorance of the precise age is almost universal," and lists the order of " preferential digits " as 0, 5; 8, 2, 4, 6; and lastly 3, 7, 1, 9. The Roman preferential digits, it may perhaps be worth while to note in passing, are quite different. No doubt in any country 1 and 9 would be somewhat disfavoured because of the " attraction " of the round 10, and 4 and 6 come after 8 and 2, through the " attraction " of 5. But in the Roman Empire we find, in contrast to India, no bias against the odd numbers, but a pronounced bias against falling short of a round number, and a preference for exceeding it; a habit of thought presumably connected with the Roman system of notation. The actual " scores " of the different digits, among 2,675 Roman alleged ages over 30 years, fall into groups, as follows :

X: 1,059	II: 194	VIII: 124	IV: 59
V: 684	III: 172	VII: 118	IX: 27
	I: 137	VI: 94	

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NOTES

[1] W. R. Macdonell; see bibliographical note at end.

[2] Vol. II, (*Démographie historique*), pp. 14-22.

[3] In *Chronique d'Egypte*, No. 39/40, (1945), pp. 139-146; also " Recherches sur le Recensement romain," in *Pap. Lugduno-Batav.*, Vol. V, 1952.

[4] In *Biometrika*, Vol. I, pp. 261-264.

[5] E.g. at Gela in Sicily; see Myres, *Geographical History in Greek Lands*, p. 199 (from Wilamowitz-Moellendorf, *Staat und Gesellschaft der Griecher*, p. 35): 233 infants (no doubt including numerous infanticides) out of a total of 570 burials.

[6] C. V. Kiser, in *Demographic Studies of Areas of Rapid Growth*, (Milbank Memorial Fund, New York, 1944).

[7] *Infant and Maternal Mortality in Relation to Size of Family and Rapidity of Breeding* (Dept. of Physiology, King's College, University of Durham, 1942).

[8] *On the Expectation of Life in Ancient Rome*, in *Biometrika*, IX (1913-14), pp. 366-80; (see bibliographical Note C).

[9] See H. H. Seiffert, in *Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly*, Vol. XIII (1935), pp. 223-236.

TABLE II

LIFE TABLES—Numbers (male only) reaching successive ages, according to the tombstones, with percentages of survivors from age 10 onwards.

	AFRICAN PROVINCES																EGYPT		
Group:	(1) TRIPOLITANA, BYZACENA AND PROCONSULARIS. General population; non-Christian.				(2) CARTHAGE: *Sepulcreta Domus Caesaris* (slaves and freedmen) and associated inscriptions; 1st and 2nd centuries.				(3) LAMBAESIS: *Castra, canabae* and adjacent settlements.				(4) CHRISTIAN inscriptions from Tripolitana, Byzacena, Proconsularis and Numidia.				(4a) Data collected by M. Hombert and Cl. Préaux, for comparison. General population. Data: Mummies, and pre-Muslim inscriptions. (Sexes not reckoned separately).		
Size of Sample:	791				745				1,112				356				813		
Numbers reaching Age:	M.	%	F.	%	M.	%	F.	%	M.	%	F.	%	M.	%	F.	%	**Numbers reaching age:**	(both sexes) %	
	442		349		447		298		616		496		210		146		5	752	
1	440		348		438		296		615		489		204		144				
2	432		347		418		281		609		476		196		135		10	699	100.0
5	418		340		386		260		588		463		181		123				
10	408	100.	335	100.	355	100.	246	100.	567	100.	438	100.	154	100.	108	100.	15	641	91.6
15	398	97.5	325	97.0	331	93.2	229	93.1	549	97.9	415	95.1	146	93.5	96	88.8	20	571	81.6
17	391	95.8	319	95.2	327	92.1	223	90.7	541	95.1	399	91.4	141	90.3	91	84.1	25	467	66.5
22	346	84.8	283	84.5	293	82.5	187	76.0	501	88.3	365	83.9	131	84.9	79	73.1	30	381	54.4
27	313	76.7	250	74.7	234	65.8	152	61.8	456	80.4	313	71.5	122	79.9	67	62.0	35	331	47.3
32	285	69.9	217	64.9	197	55.5	119	48.4	407	71.7	267	61.0	111	73.7	58	53.7	40	274	39.2
37	255	62.5	188	56.1	170	47.9	97	39.9	360	63.5	220	50.2	102	66.5	54	50.0	45	226	32.3
42	226	56.9	169	50.4	140	39.4	73	29.7	301	53.0	173	39.7	90	58.3	51	47.2	50	192	27.6
52	180	43.9	134	40.1	97	27.3	54	21.9	206	36.3	123	28.2	73	47.4	42	38.9	55	132	18.9
62	142	35.3	99	29.5	71	20.0	32	13.0	141	24.9	80	18.4	55	35.8	30	27.8	60	107	15.3
72	91	22.8	63	18.7	40	11.5	22	9.1	87	15.3	42	9.3	31	20.1	18	16.7	65	72	10.3
82	43	9.5	31	9.2	19	5.35	9	3.7	26	4.6	16	3.7	15	9.7	5	4.7	70	51	7.3
92	15	3.7	12	3.6	10	2.8	3	1.2	10	1.8	9	2.1	5	3.3	2	1.9	75	41	5.9
102	7	1.7	3	0.9	3*	0.84	1	0.4	3	0.52	4*	0.91			2	1.9	80	30	4.3
112	1	0.24							1	0.18							85	19	2.7
150 (sic)	1	0.24							1	0.18							90	10	1.4

(1) CIL VIII, 1-1836.
(2) CIL VIII, Suppl. I, 12590-13229; Suppl. iv, 24629-25004.
(3) CIL VIII, 2755-4183.
(4) CIL VIII, passim; esp. 1-1836 ; Suppl. iv, 22659-23797, 25046-25361; also *L'Année Epigraphique*, 1914-1949; Reynolds and W. Perkins, *Inscrs. of Tripolitania*
(4a) Source: see *Latomus* V (1946) pp. 91-97

II.—LIFE TABLES (continued).

SOUTHERN EUROPE

Group:	(5) SPAIN: Conventus Emeritensis, Lusitania.		(6) AQUITAINE: Bordeaux.		(7) CALABRIA: Brundisium and neighbouring towns.		(8) CHRISTIAN Inscriptions (4th-6th cent.) from CISALPINE GAUL, esp. Milan and Aquileia.				(9) S. EUROPE, Pagan; (Average of percentages, cols. 5 to 7).	
Size of Sample:	157		265		171		191				593	
Numbers reaching Age:	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	%	F.	%	M.	F.
0	90	—	155	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1	89	—	148	—	—	76	108	—	93	—	—	—
2	89	—	147	—	95	74	102	—	92	—	—	—
5	81	67	144	115	92	69	93	—	78	—	—	—
10	80	65	139	105	83	66	85	100.	73	100.	100.	100.
15	75	65	133	99	76	65	79	92.9	66	90 4	93.7	97.6
17	72	63	127	96	73	64	78	91.8	64	87.7	89.8	95.1
22	68	47	111	88	70	58	72	84.7	57	78.1	83.1	82.7
27	62	38	99	72	64	54	69	81.2	48	65.8	74.5	71.3
32	53	26	89	62	58	46	62	73.0	43	58.9	66.7	56.3
37	41	22	81	54	50	38	55	64.7	39	53.4	56.6	47.6
42	31	16	72	44	40	31	47	55.3	31	42.4	46.4	37.9
52	16	8	51	23	30	20	40	47.0	20	27.2	30.7	21.5
62	15	2	30	12	14	9	27	30.6	9	12.3	19.0	9.4
72	6	—	12	4	11	6	14	16.4	5	6.8	9.8	4.3
82	—	—	2	1	1	2	5	5.9	1	1.4	0.95	1.3
92	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	1.2	—	—	—	0.5

(5) CIL II, 461-950.
(6) CIL XIII, 1, 593-897.
(7) CIL IX, 7-257.
(8) CIL V, passim, esp. 1620-1704, 5400-5440, 6176-6343.

II.—LIFE TABLES (continued).

CENTRAL EUROPE

Group:	(10) NORICUM North-eastern districts.		(11) PANNONIA SUPERIOR All inscrs.		(12) PANNONIA INFERIOR All inscrs.		(13) DACIA All inscrs.		(14) CENTRAL EUROPE: (Average of percentages, cols. 10 to 13).	
Size of Sample:	358		404		207		291		1260	
Numbers reaching	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M. %	F. %
0–1			273	131			185			
1			272	130	138	69	184			
2	211		271	128	136	68	181	106		
5	209	144	257	124	129	66	171	97		
10	192	137	241	119	119	60	162	91	100.	100.
15	185	130	233	113	108	53	151	82	94.3	92.1
17	180	128	227	110	105	49	145	79	90.9	87.5
22	160	114	206	96	97	37	140	58	84.9	72.3
27	143	101	179	81	86	25	129	49	74.8	59.3
32	114	73	150	67	70	18	108	35	61.8	44.5
37	105	61	130	59	56	13	95	30	53.4	35.4
42	95	39	105	52	43	10	81	22	44.7	28.3
52	72	26	68	39	28	5	48	16	29.2	19.6
62	41	13	40	23	18	1	21	7	14.4	9.5
72	20	11	24	13	9	1	13	2	9.0	5.7
82	5	6	13	4	2		3		2.9	1.9
92	5	2	5	3			1		1.3	1.0
102		1	1*						0.1	0.2
112		1								
120 (sic)		1								

(10) CIL III, 2, 5125-5769.
(11) CIL III, 1 and Suppl. 1.
(12) CIL III, 1 and Suppl. 1.
(13) CIL III, 1, 786-1626.

Size of Sample:	(15) BRITAIN: All Inscriptions; mostly soldiery and dependents. 190				(16) LAMBAESIS: Comparative figures for military (including veterans) and civilian male population. Sources: See Col. 3. 541				(17) DANUBE PROVINCES Sources: See Cols. 12-13. 657			
Numbers reaching Age:	M.	%	F.	%	Mil.	%	Civ.	%	Mil.	%	Civ.	%
0			64									
1	126		63									
2	124		62									
5	120		57									
10	113	100.	51	100.								
15	108	95.6	47	92.2								
17	104	91.5	46	90.2	297	100.	244	100.	284	100.	373	100.
22	98	86.4	42	82.4	288	96.9	213	87.2	268	97.8	335	89.8
27	87	76.7	39	76.5	264	88.9	192	77.3	233	84.8	304	81.5
32	73	64.0	30	59.7	236	79.4	173	70.8	187	65.8	255	68.4
37	65	56.9	22	43.1	203	68.3	157	64.3	158	55.6	228	61.2
42	44	38.8	14	27.4	164	55.2	137	56.1	125	45.4	199	53.4
52	22	19.4	8	15.6	97	32.7	109	45.3	77	27.1	139	37.2
62	15	13.1	3	5.9	58	19.6	83	33.9	39	13.7	81	21.7
72	8	7.0	2	3.9	30	10.1	57	22.9	19	6.7	47	12.6
82	3	2.7	1	1.96	6	2.0	20	8.2	7	2.5	16	4.2
92	1	0.88			1	0.34	9	3.6	2	0.7	9	2.4
102									1	0.35	1	0.2

(15) CIL VII; *Eph. Ep.* 3, 4, 7 and 9; *J.R.S.*, Vols. 12 to 32; etc.

III.—TWO MODERN ORIENTAL LIFE-TABLES

With Percentages, reckoned from age 10, for comparison.

	(1) INDIA: 1901-10.					(2) EGYPT: 1927-37.			
Born:	**M.**	**%**	**F.**	**%**	**Born:**	**M.**	**%**	**F.**	**%**
Alive at Age:	1000	from age 10	1000	from age 10	Alive at Age:	1000	from age 10	1000	from age 10
5	553		566		5	641		678	
10	502	100.	514	100.	10	614	100.	656	100.
15	472	94.0	483	94.0	15	[c. 572]*		[c. 608]*	
20	438	87.3	448	87.3	20	530	86.0	560	85.4
30	358	71.3	367	71.3	30	449	73.1	467	71.2
40	271	54.0	281	56.1	40	370	60.3	377	57.5
50	187	37.5	197	39.3	50	290	47.2	290	43.9
60	112	22.1	122	24.3	60	209	34.0	208	31.7
70	51	10.2	56	10.9	70	129	21.0	132	20.1
80	10	2.0	11	2.1	80	58	9.3	68	10.4
90	0.11	0.02	0.12	0.02	90	10.8	1.8	21.3	3.3
100	—	—	—	—	100	0.1		0.2	

(*) Interpolated — A.R.B.

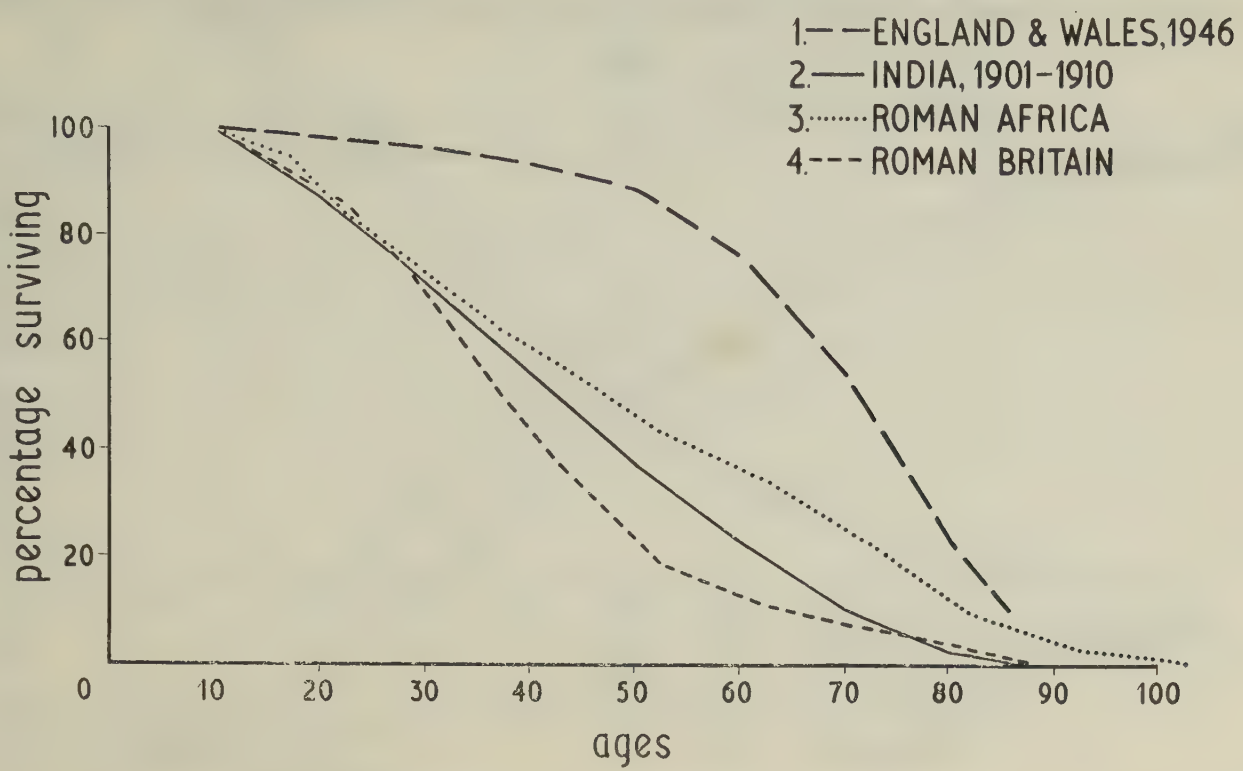
(1) *Census of India*, 1931, *Report*, pp. 169-70.

(2) Source: C. V. Kiser, in *Demographic Studies of Selected Areas of Rapid Growth* (Milbank Memorial Fund, New York, 1944).

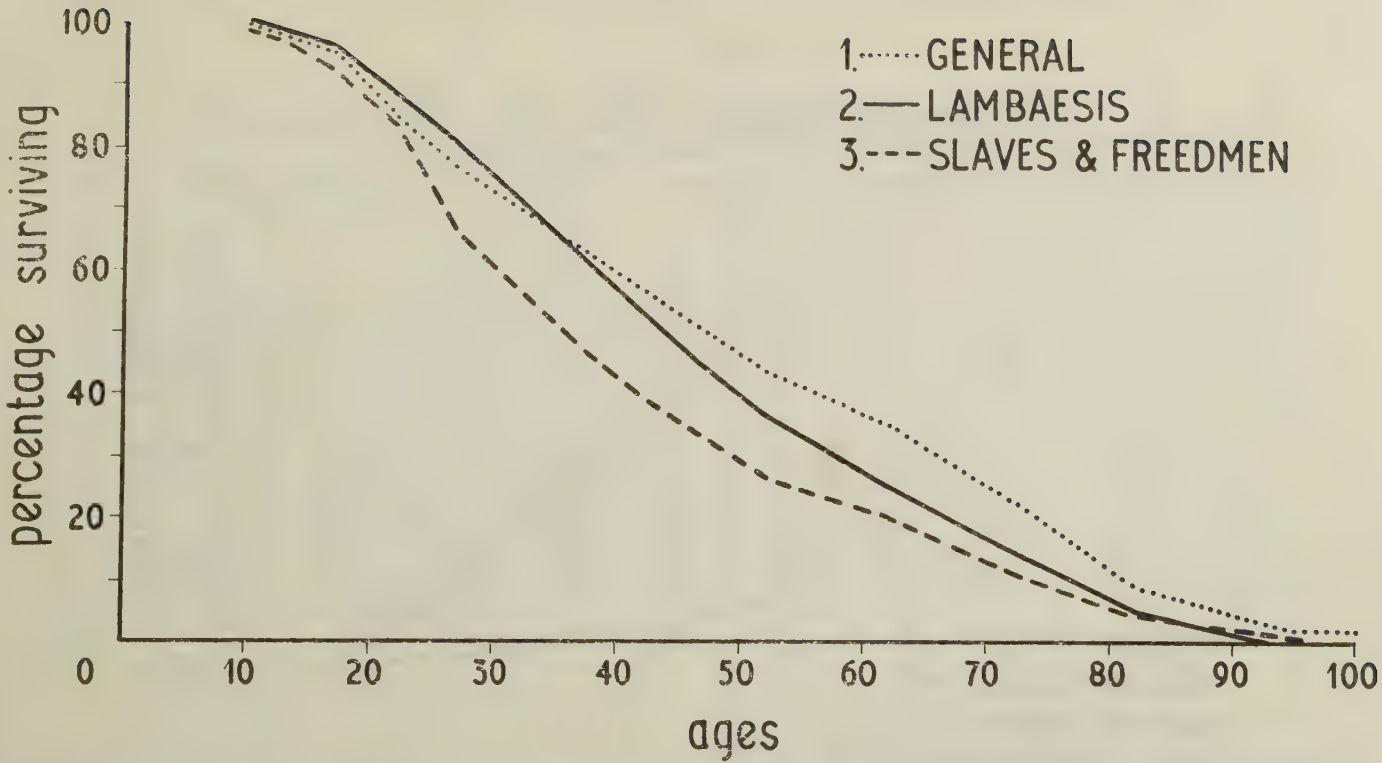
GRAPHS

The graphs show the percentages of those alive at the age of 10 who remain alive at successive ages up to the age of 100 (alleged).

A. ANCIENT AND MODERN POPULATIONS COMPARED (males only)

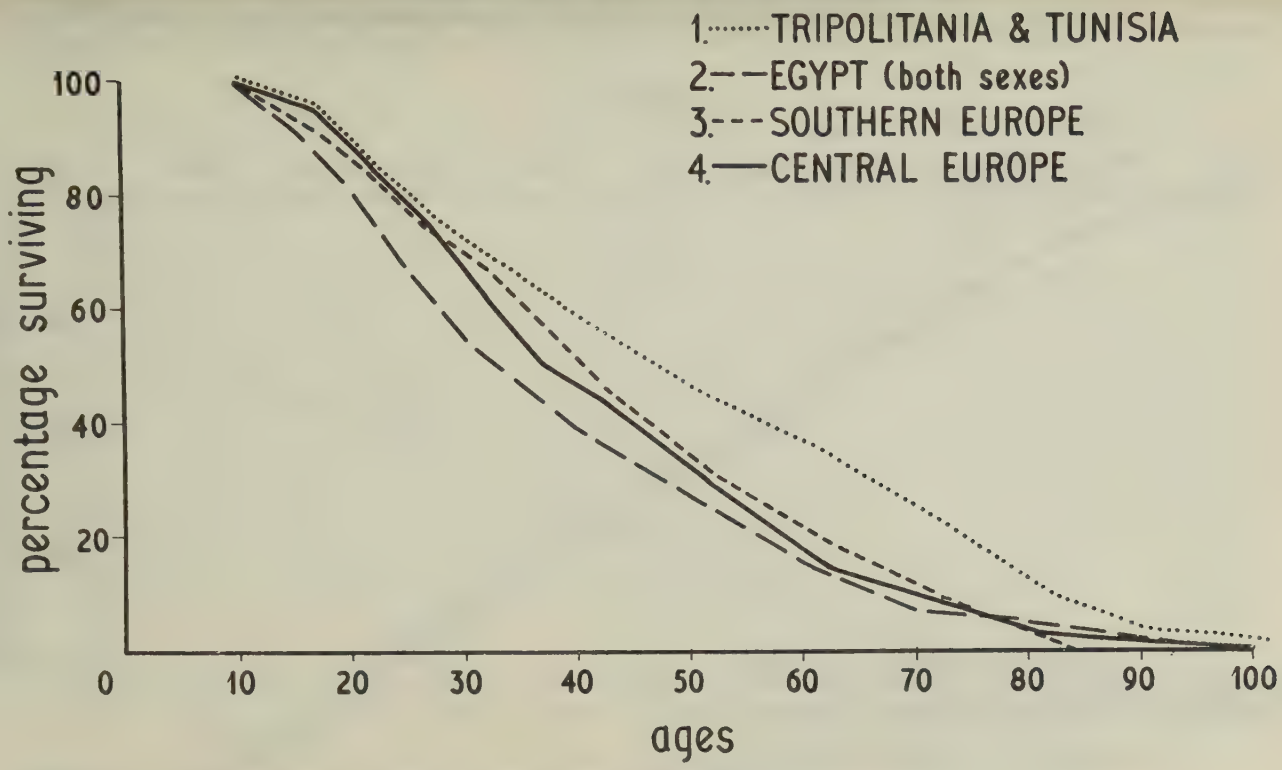


1. showing a population living throughout under conditions of 1946.
3. excludes (a) Egypt and (b) slaves at Carthage



1. Tripolitania and Tunisia, excluding (2) and (3) below. This line therefore denotes mostly well-to-do civilians and their dependents.
2. Legionary cantonment and adjacent settlements.
3. Slaves and freedmen of " Cæsar's Household " at Carthage.

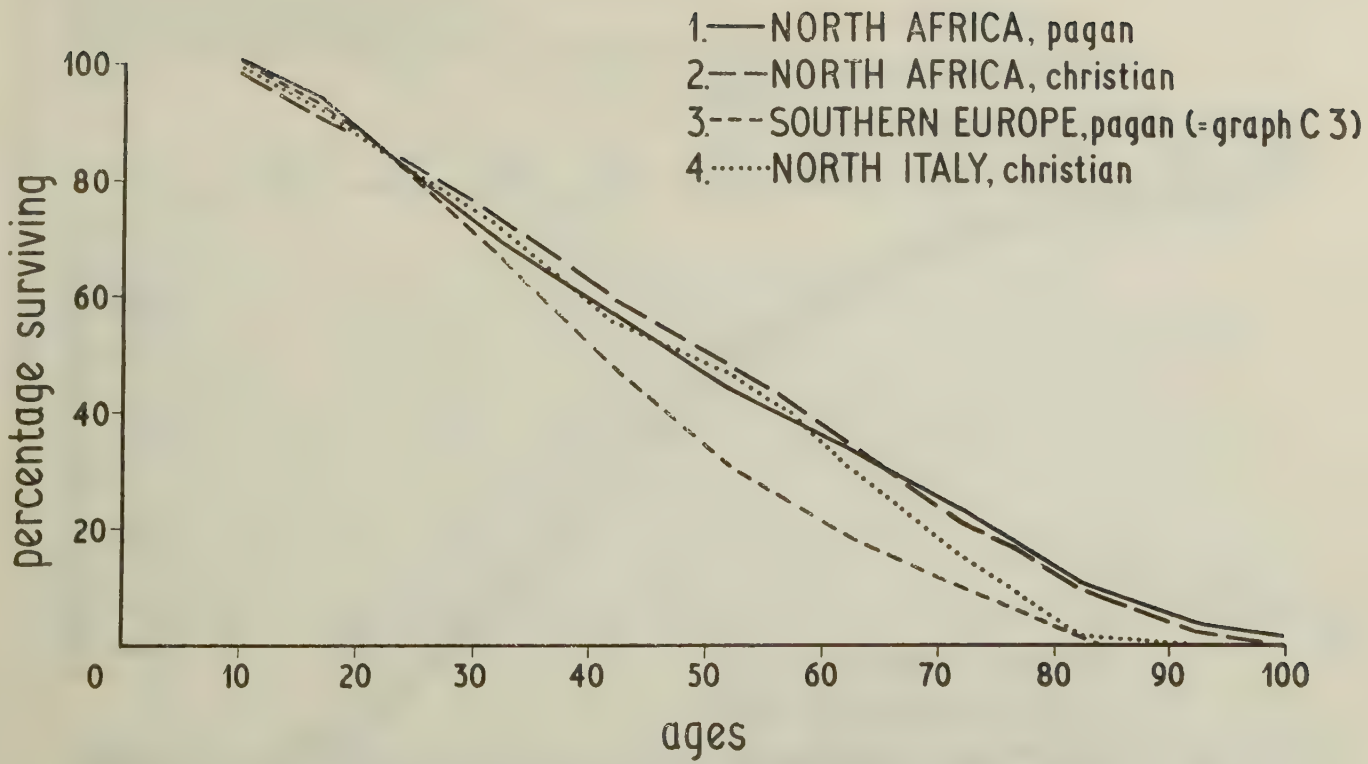
All Christian stones are excluded. The period is therefore chiefly from the first to the third century inclusive. For the Christian period (i.e. the fourth century and after) see graph D.



1. Civil districts, excluding slaves at Carthage, (graph A3 and B1) (males only).
2. After M. Hombert and Claire Préaux (both sexes).
3. Average of columns 5, 5a, 6 (males only).
4. Average of columns 8, 9, 10, 11 (males only).

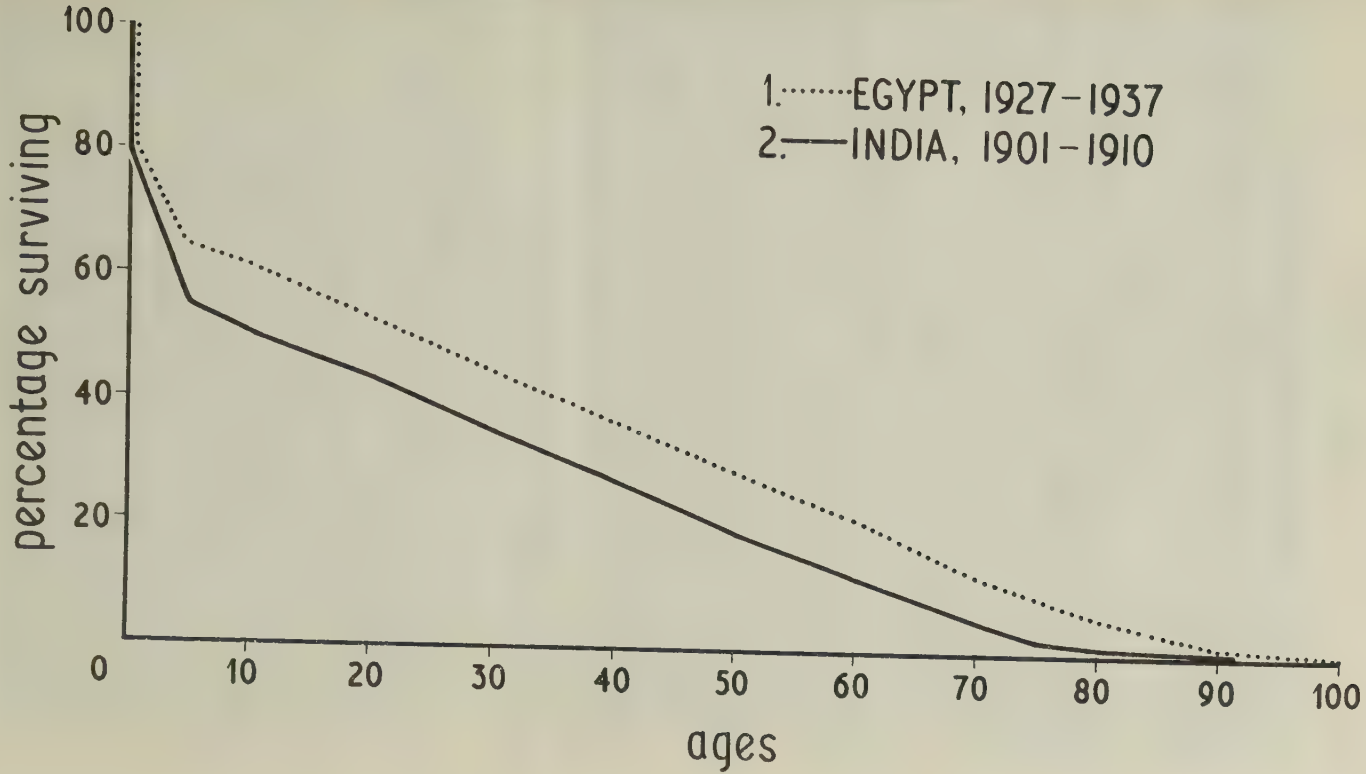
For Christian tombstones (fourth century and after), see graph D.

The most noteworthy points are the unhealthiness of Egypt in comparison with Tunisia (citizen population); and the absence of alleged very great ages in southern Europe (perhaps due to greater accuracy)



1. Tripolitania and Tunisia, excluding slaves at Carthage (= A3, B1, C1); non-Christian stones, i.e. chiefly first to third centuries A.D.
2. Christian stones, i.e. fourth to sixth centuries A.D.
4. Especially Milan and Aquileia.

E. TWO MODERN ORIENTAL POPULATIONS (males only)
(To show relations of infantile, child and adult death-rates).



BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Particulars of the sources used for each group will be found prefixed to the appropriate column of the life-tables. They are here summarised, for convenience, together with a brief critical note on some of the few modern articles in this field.

(A). Primary Sources

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For Britain :

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Journal of Roman Studies, Vols. XII onwards.

For the " Ulpian Table," *Digest*, XXXV, 2, § 68.

(B). Sources for Modern Comparative Material

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H. E. Seifert, " Life-Tables for Chinese Farmers," in *The Milbank Memorial Quarterly*, XIII (1935), pp. 223-36.

Clyde V. Kiser, " The Demographic Position of Egypt," in *Demographic Studies of Selected Areas of Rapid Growth* (Milbank Memorial Fund, New York, 1944).

C. M. Burns, *Infant and Maternal Mortality in Relation to Size of Family and Rapidity of Breeding* (University of Durham, 1942).

(C). Some Modern Articles: a Critical Note

The best treatment of the ancient evidence on a single area is that of Marcel Hombert and Mlle. Claire Préaux on Egypt, published in *Chronique d'Egypte*, Nos. 39/40, (1945); cf. also their *Recherches sur le Recensement romain*, Pap. Lugduno-Batav., Vol. V, (1952). Their results are summarised, for comparison, in my Table (Column 4a).

The most important article covering the whole field of ancient vital statistics is that of Willcox (see above, Page 3): *The Length of Life in the Early Roman Empire: a Methodological Note.* In this he points out that earlier workers in this field had omitted to ask themselves the essential questions whether they are dealing with a stationary population, whether the " sample " provided by the available material is a representative one, and, if not, in what direction and to what extent it is unrepresentative. Most, as a result, had not even noticed the flagrant under-representation of the earliest ages. From this angle he severely criticises such work as that of A. de Marchi, *Cifre di mortalità nelle Iscrizioni romane*, in *Rendiconti del Reale Istituto Lombardo di Scienze e Lettere*; Bessie E. Richardson, *Old Age among the Greeks and Romans* (1933); and, the most ambitious and important of previous articles, that of W. R. Macdonell in *Biometrika*, IX (1913-14), on *The Expectation of Life in Ancient Rome.* Willcox observed the fundamental flaws in his predecessors' work detailed above, but, not being a specialist in ancient history, though eminent in his own field, he was not in a position greatly to improve on them; he describes his contribution, modestly and accurately, as *A Methodological Note.* Thus, for example, he

notes that on Macdonell's figures the average age of decedents in Rome was 15.5 years less than in Spain, and from his experience of vital statistics instinctively feels that there is something wrong; but without suspecting the real root of the trouble, which is much worse than he realised — the fact, that is, that Macdonell, throughout all his extremely painstaking investigation, never observed that the habit of building one's mausoleum *vivus sibi et suis* meant that the longer one lived, the greater was the likelihood of one's age not appearing on one's tombstone at all. Willcox also disbelieves as we have seen, the evidence of the ancient epitaphs that " the average age of the females was less than that of the males. Modern life-tables, he continues, " indicate that female decedents average older than male. We may conclude that the records should not be used, as de Marchi and Macdonell did, [sic] to measure the average length of life of each sex." As we have seen above, the study of comparable figures (i.e. omitting child-mortality) especially for some demographically backward areas shows that there is no ground for scepticism on this point.

There appears also to be some basic mistake underlying the statistics derived by Willcox from Seifert (*op. cit.*, above), which should be compared with their original.

It may perhaps be worth adding that the articles of A. Gagner and H. Armini in *Eranos*, Vols. 24, 25 (1926-7), *Kring romersk livslangsstatistik*, in spite of their title, do not attempt a systematic study; they are merely contributions to a controversy on the degree of credibility of some of the allegations of inordinately great ages common on Roman stones, particularly in Africa, a controversy turning not least on the question how often C = *centum* and how often it = *circiter*.

In conclusion it must be emphasised that Macdonell's article, in which he bases conclusions on the reading of over 20,000 inscriptions, though rendered useless for its main purpose by the faults indicated above, and though severely criticised by Willcox, is by no means without interest in some of its details and *obiter dicta*; especially his collection of the ages of 59 middle and lower-middle class women at the time of their marriages.

The weak points of Macdonell's work are, indeed, a subject which I would gladly have ignored, did it not appear that they are less clearly appreciated by some scholars than one might have assumed.

The Rural Sociology of Medieval England

I

AS A SOCIOLOGIST WHO HAS WORKED WITH MATERIAL TRADITIONALLY called historical, I may be excused for beginning this essay with some ideas on the relations between sociology and history in general before going on to suggest the contributions a sociological point of view may make to the study of English society in the Middle Ages.[1]

The classical historians from Herodotus to Gibbon did not find specialization a problem. Their main emphasis was political, but they had no inhibitions about entering any field of social behaviour. With the appearance in the 19th century of professional historians, history has tended to develop into a set of historical specialities. Of these political history was the earliest, as being closer to the classical tradition, but it was soon joined by constitutional, legal, religious, and economic histories. Social history was the last to enter this company, and it naturally took as its province whatever the others had left untouched. Its field was residual — such things as cultural history and the history of social classes. When I first attended lectures on social history, I even heard the history of the two-pant suit. Such was the American school of the " New History " — now several decades old.

Although social history as a new and residual historical specialization has a rich vein to work, this is not what I have chiefly in mind when I speak of the contribution sociology can make to history. Whatever its specialization, history is the study of changes in human behaviour over time. In the period when professional history was developing, another method of studying social behaviour made its appearance, which was called sociology or social anthropology and, by and large, did not concern itself with changes over time. Sociology was concerned with contemporary literate communities, and found the study of their past already pre-empted by historians. Social anthropology was concerned with contemporary non-literate communities, which by that fact did not possess a recorded history, and when the discipline attempted historical reconstruction, it found the results less illuminating than others it could more easily obtain.

Forced out of the time dimension, sociology did its work in another dimension, that of the contemporary interrelations of institutions. Politics, law, economics, kinship, religion were not, for sociology, specialities to be pursued by different professionals, but institutions whose contemporary relationships in a community — usually a

small one — were to be examined by one professional. The guiding theoretical idea of sociology is that of the social system, in which all the institutions of a society are assumed to be interrelated until proved otherwise. A change in one institution will, on this theory, be accompanied by changes in other institutions, but in practice these changes are not followed over the time dimension but rather over space — by comparison of different societies.

In order to make a distinction at all, I make it too sharp. But here it is: there are now two main methods of studying social behaviour, one specializing, upon the whole, on types of institution, concerned with time series, and mainly non-comparative; another specializing on the contemporary, concerned with the interrelations of institutions, and often comparative in its emphasis. The former is history, the latter, sociology. We can at once think of studies that fall easily into neither class. Where does Toynbee fit? Yet the distinction seems to me to reflect differences in behaviour between many historians and many sociologists. So defined, the two disciplines are so obviously complementary that I believe we may look forward to their fusion in studies of society as a system of interrelated institutions changing as a whole through time. Then indeed we shall be close to the systematic scientific history some of us, though not perhaps those who cling to history as an art, have looked forward to for so long. I do not believe in the least that the two are natural enemies.

II

I shall now try to illustrate the kind of contribution a sociologist may make to the common task I have just set for us. I shall give a sociologist's view of two main types of English social organization in the Middle Ages and their historical consequences, the two being the social organization of East Anglia and Kent, on the one side, and, on the other, that of central or open-field England. I shall leave out of account both the Celtic world of the West and the debateable land of Essex, Middlesex, and Surrey. In this work, I shall take both the roles I have already sketched out: that of the social historian who occupies himself with kinds of history which other historians eschew — in my case, the history of family organization — and that of the sociologist who occupies himself with the interrelations of institutions.

The facts of English ethnography in the Middle Ages are simple enough in their main lines. I speak of what are in effect statistical differences, differences between the commonest, not the only, forms of social organization in two distinct areas. Central England is marked by large, compact villages, whose fields are managed according to customary rules binding on all villagers — one or another

variety of the so-called open-field system or champion husbandry. In these fields, a villager's holding lies in strips scattered all over the fields, with approximately equal acreage in each one. The holdings tend to be equal, class by class: there may be yardlands and half-yardlands, but each yardland is normally equal to every other one. A holding in villeinage or socage is commonly held by one man and descends to one of his sons. And many of the holdings are villein holdings, subject to heavy labour-services for the lord of the manor.

Arrangements in Kent and much of East Anglia differ at almost every point from those just described.[2] Let me take Kent first. Kent is marked by settlements smaller than the open-field villages, settlements I shall call hamlets. The holding does not originally consist of scattered strips. The earlier the date, the more often it appears instead as a compact body of land, the hamlet apparently lying close to the land. The holding is managed as an independent farming unit, not subject to many communal rules, though often following in fact a traditional rotation of crops. The holdings may once have been equal in size, but by the end of the 13th century such equality has degenerated, and irregularity is the rule rather than the exception.

A husbandman's holding tends to be in the hands of a group of men often called *participes*, sometimes called *heredes*, and it is often clear that these men are patrilineal kinsmen. The custom of inheritance in Kent is called gavelkind, and recognized by the lawyers as being different from most of the rest of England. Land descends to a number of heirs jointly, as when in Lewisham in 1301, Walter, Robert, Richard, and John take seisin of a holding as " the sons and one heir of Gerard Ate Pirie."[3] It looks as if we had to do with joint-family communities like those Le Play described as still existing in the Auvergne in the 19th century: groups of men claiming descent from a common patrilineal ancestor, living in one house or a small group of houses, and managing in common a compact body of land, under the leadership of the oldest or ablest male of each successive senior generation. But the custom of Kent also allows an action for the physical partition of a holding among heirs, and hence, we must presume, for dissolution of the joint-family community. Already in the 13th century lawyers are claiming that this is resulting in what the French were later to call *morcellement*: division carried so far that holdings are too small to get a living from.[4]

Again unlike open-field England, Kent by the end of the 13th century holds few villeins. Week-work for the lord of the manor is the badge of villeinage, and week-work is uncommon in Kent.

The customs of East Anglia, including the villages on the southern shore of the Wash, are mixed, but in many places identical with those of Kent. The fact of gavelkind inheritance is certainly common, though not the name, Holdings seem at one time to have been fairly

compact, but they have become much broken up by partible inheritance. The proportion of free socage to villein tenures is higher than in central England, though lower than in Kent. East Anglia differs from Kent chiefly in the fact that settlement seems to be in big villages rather than hamlets, but even here the two districts are alike in lacking strict two- or three-field systems of husbandry.

There is some evidence that these contrasts repeat themselves on the southern shore of the Channel, notably between the Old Saxon area of Germany and the Frankish-Frisian area.[5] We have on the one hand a strong village community linked with what Le Play called in *Les ouvriers européens* a stem-family, and on the other hand a weak or non-existent village community linked with a joint-family. Big village, small family or small village, big family — the contrast is over-simple but not fantastically so.

III

As far as tenements and field systems are concerned, the facts just cited have long been known to, and attentively studied by, economic historians. But aside from the old family solicitor and an occasional great man like Maitland, it takes a social historian, a snapper-up of trifles unconsidered by other historians, to show any interest in the history of inheritance, and especially a social anthropologist, whose first task in the field is usually to grapple with a society's kinship system.

The facts are further interesting in that no historical account of their origin has ever been given. Here are two parts of England, Kent and East Anglia, which in the 13th century resemble one another in custom and differ sharply from the rest of England. Moreover, the differences are, in 1300, already old. They certainly go back to the 12th century,[6] and statistical contrasts, revealed in Domesday Book, between south-eastern England and the rest of the country suggest that they were present at the time of the Conquest.[7] I shall speak of the statistics later. From the Conquest back to the invasions is a long jump, but the presence of parallel differences in custom among the continental Germans of later centuries is at least one point in favour of the view that the Anglo-Saxons brought at least two different types of social organization to England with them. We know that, in the absence of technical change, custom tends to persist, and that emigrants take their social organization across the sea with them, as when the English of the 17th century took English institutions, including the open-field system, across the Atlantic to New England.

Of course it is no explanation of the particular character of custom, but I should be happy if we were at least able to attach these differences in custom to differences in the names and places of settlement of

invading tribes, as the anthropologist attaches such differences to tribal names like Hopi and Navaho, but this we are able to do only in part. We may take some comfort from Kent, as Bede tells us it was settled not by Angles or Saxons but by Jutes, whose custom, Jolliffe suggests, most resembled that of the Franks, right across the Channel.[8] But nobody has hinted that the Jutes, whoever they may have been, also settled East Anglia. If, in fact, the latter name is really an old folk-name — and I myself should lay more weight on the very distinctive county names — the settlers must have been Angles, and yet their custom, if my hypothesis of antiquity is correct, differed sharply from that of the Middle Angles to the westward. Or if we assume that East Anglia was heavily resettled by Danes, we must still account for differences in custom between East Anglian Danes and those of the rest of the Danelaw. Perhaps these problems are insoluble for lack of evidence, yet I do think it a pity that historians of the Germanic invasions like Myres, do not consider the similarity of the customs of East Anglia and Kent to one another worthy of notice.[9] For myself, I believe that the distribution of custom, even if first recorded at much later times, is just as good a basis for historical reconstruction as the distribution of brooches and burials, and that England was invaded by two sorts of Germans — Anglo-Saxons and Friso-Jutes — whose areas of settlement were not quite those assigned to them at present. In short, East Anglia and Kent were invaded by the same kind of people.

IV

But I am not just suggesting that the distribution of field systems, types of holding, and customs of inheritance is interesting in itself and cries for some account of its origin. If the social historian picks up the scraps, like inheritance, that have fallen from the table of more respectable scholars, the sociologist is something more — a student of the interrelations of institutions in a social system. His cardinal assumption is that, if one or more institutions in a society are of a given kind, the variations in the other institutions are not random but rather to some degree determined. That is, the society has a structure. Or, to put it still more simply, different institutions have different consequences. From his point of view, the concomitant variation of field systems, types of holding, and customs of inheritance over the same geographical boundaries in medieval England is a fact of the most significant kind, for it suggests to him that he is dealing with types of social organization that differ as structural wholes. These differences must have consequences for the other characteristics of social organization. I shall speak of three fields in which organizational differences between Kent and East

Anglia, on the one hand, and open-field England on the other, may have had different historical consequences. These fields are: population, commercial interests in land, and manorial development. Here I am again in the area of speculation, though I have some facts to go on.

In his admirable papers on the Domesday villeins and sokemen,[10] Reginald Lennard shows that in Lincolnshire (I should be interested in knowing *what parts* of the county), Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, and Kent the Domesday figures reveal a higher proportion of villeins and sokemen holding small numbers of plow oxen and small pieces of land than in other parts of England. I am aware of the booby traps that an attempt to translate such figures into population estimates may encounter, but Lennard himself believes that population was actually denser in the south-east. At any rate, the results are obviously compatible with the customs of inheritance in Kent and East Anglia. Not only should partible inheritance lead, under reasonably favourable economic and sanitary conditions, to a rise in population, but descent of land to one son should lead to relative stability of population. In the latter case, the sons who do not inherit have no land to support families; in some places custom explicitly forbids their marrying, and the son who is to inherit does not marry until his father transfers the holding to him.[11] As a breeder, he starts behind the man who marries early. He may catch up, but has his work cut out for him, and in any event his is only one breeding-unit on a holding that might, under different custom, have contained several.

We know that in other situations rules of inheritance may have an important influence on population. A good example is the recent history of the population of Ireland. Before the famine of 1846, land among Irish countrymen, like other Celts, was partible among the sons of the last holder. Observers spoke of the early age of marriage, and population in relation to resources was obviously high. As a result of the famine, laws were enacted that had the effect of restricting the inheritance of land to one son. As custom developed, this son did not marry until his father was ready to transfer management of the farm to him. Today in Ireland the average age of marriage is the latest in the world, and population has been cut in half in a century.[12] It is no use telling me that this was the result of emigration. The rule of inheritance provided the human material for emigration. (By the way, there is little illegitimacy in Ireland, in spite of the large number of unmarried adults.)

Nor is it any use telling me that the population figures for medieval East Anglia can be accounted for by the fact that the standard tenement was somewhat smaller than the midland yardland. This only begs the question why it should be smaller. In any event,

many countrymen in south-eastern England had, by the end of the 13th century and as a result of the subdivision of holdings, dangerously little land to live on. As I have pointed out, contemporary observers recognized this, at least in Kent. Poor farmers may look for other means of support. Is this a partial explanation for the early rise of a clothing industry in East Anglia? Or even for the Peasants' Revolt?

On the subject of a commercial market in land, I am on less sure ground because I cannot cite statistics. Some years ago, as I ranged through the custumals and court rolls of the 13th century, I certainly got the impression that the buying, selling, and exchanging of small parcels of land was more characteristic of south-eastern England than of the open-field country. And I wondered why this should be. It is easy to point out that the South-East was the country nearest to London and the big commercial cities of Flanders and thus peculiarly subject to commercial influences — whatever actual behaviour we may subsume under that phrase. But granting the presence of these influences, I wondered if the social systems of the South-East might not have been peculiarly vulnerable to their action.

We do not know what motives impelled men to dissolve the joint-family farms of Kent and East Anglia, but we do know that by the end of the 13th century partition had produced a large number of countrymen holding very small acreages indeed. If a man holds too little land to support him in any event, he may well feel few qualms at getting rid of some more of it, especially when other opportunities for making a living, such as weaving, may be open to him. Such conditions create the willing seller. As for the willing buyer, he certainly expressed in later centuries a desire to get land that he could manage more or less as he wished, without regard for rules of tillage binding on the whole community. Such, by and large, were the lands of Kent and East Anglia, in comparison with those of the open-field.

A person's rank or status is, moreover, closely related to the standard of living he can maintain and thus, in peasant societies, to the size of his holding. When inheritance is partible, and, as they naturally will, some men have more male heirs than others, the amount of land held by any line of single families is apt to change, generation by generation. That is, the status system is going to be relatively fluid. A family with many heirs is, by selling land, only hastening a process that will take place in any event, while a family with few may be able to reverse the process or hold its own by buying.

In the openfield villages, on the other hand, the tenements are normally equal in size, class by class, with sharp differences between classes: yardlands, half-yardlands, cotsetles. That the rank of these classes is important can be seen in their association with different

manorial and village offices, which differ in responsibility. The reeve comes from the yardlanders, the hayward from the half-yardlanders, and the lord's plowman from the cotters.[13] The rule of inheritance by one son implies that, if all goes well, the rank of family-lines within the village, instead of being fluid, remains constant generation by generation. Under these conditions, the sale of land from a tenement threatens irreparable damage to the relative rank of a lineage: its equality with its peers. Sale does not merely add fluidity to a situation already fluid, but makes a fundamental breach in the status system. Hence we may argue that a responsible tenant will be reluctant to sell, and that an irresponsible one will be restrained by rules against alienation. We may also argue that the partible South-East is more vulnerable, the impartible open-field less vulnerable, to commercial influences, so long as the sale of land is easiest where it does least social damage.

Commercial dealing in land, with its concomitant, the opportunity to consolidate holdings, together with freedom from overriding village custom in the use of land, may lead to the formation of new holdings managed by methods resembling modern ones. That is, these conditions may lead to enclosure. By the time of the Agricultural Revolution, the South-East had become one of the old-enclosed parts of England. And gavelkind inheritance seems to have become a rule applied only in case of intestacy — which opens up a whole new field of inquiry.

As for the influence of different forms of peasant custom on different forms of manorial development, I have argued that the customs of countrymen, from field-systems to customs of inheritance, are primary and early, probably as old as the Anglo-Saxon invasions. But it has also been argued that at least the customs of inheritance are the mere creation of lords of manors pursuing their economic interest. Where their tenants pay them rents for the most part, they are willing to allow partible inheritance, since rents are easily divisible, but where heavy labour services are attached to villein holdings, the lords insist on impartibility, since responsibility for services is not so easily divided. We do not have to accept the argument, as there are plenty of cases in East Anglia in which the holders of parts of a tenement combine, by arrangements unknown to us, to carry out the labour services due from the tenement as a whole. The argument assumes, moreover, that a lord could always, in fact as well as in law, do what he would with his villeins; that is, he was an omnipotent village tyrant — an unrealistic assumption to which I shall return later. But even if we do accept the argument, it still leaves unanswered the question why some manors had heavy labour services and some did not, that is, why the lords' alleged interests arose at all, and why heavy labour services should have been associated with open-field agriculture.

For it is a fact, as I have pointed out, that a higher proportion of tenants in free socage to tenants in villeinage obtained in Kent and East Anglia than in central England. (I am leaving out of consideration the northern Danelaw.) This was true at the time of Domesday, and by the end of the 13th century very little villeinage remained in Kent. And the most characteristic stigma of villeinage is heavy labour-services for the lord of the manor. Nor was the phenomenon limited to England. One of the greatest of social historians, Marc Bloch, claimed that the full-blown *seigneurie* appeared in France " north of the Loire and on the Burgundian plain," that is, in the open-field part of the country.[14] He argued that the feudal system itself developed its classic form only under these conditions. Is this phenomenon a matter of chance, or is it, as a sociologist would assume as his first working hypothesis, related to other aspects of the social system?

For purposes of argument alone, let us assume that a man of war, sometime in the Dark Ages, wanted to secure from a body of husbandmen material sustenance for himself and his retainers. In those days, he might well be able to get work more easily out of them than money, and if work was what he wanted, how much more easy to mobilize the labour of a village community, its members living in one centre and tilling their fields in co-operation, than that of a looser society, like Kent and its continental kin, where joint-family residence was scattered and inter-familial co-operation less fully developed. Since human material can be beaten into shape by force only at great expense, and is in any event not infinitely malleable, how much more easy to work with an organization ready at hand than to create one *de novo* — even if one knew what one wanted to create. Although humanitarian ideas weighed less heavily with them than with most invaders, the *conquistadores* of New Spain, when they tried to turn the Carib hunters and fishers into estate labourers, merely succeeded in killing them off. It was not until they discovered the settled agricultural populations of Mexico and Peru that they were able to establish themselves as country gentlemen. They had to work with the existing social organization. " So," said Marc Bloch, " it would be a grave error to assume any necessary opposition between the bonds of the village community and those of the *seigneurie*."[15] I should go farther and say that the manor could be strong only where the village community was strong.

But we are not bound to think of the original lords of manors as *conquistadores*, men of war from abroad coming in to impose their will on the natives. Manorial development must have been much more gradual than this, though no less closely linked to underlying social organization. As Bloch again pointed out, we have only to think of the lord of the manor as the successor to a village chief.[16]

Here the sociolgist finds his comparative perspective useful: he knows of classic studies of the chief in such primitive societies as Tikopia and the Trobriand Islands.[17] There the chief is titular owner of the land of the community, but he can exercise his rights only with due regard for the varied rights of his men, who make him gifts of food, which he distributes again in support of workers carrying out tasks, such as canoe-building, useful to the community as a whole but beyond the capacity of any single family. He is the lord of the land, but also the mobilizer of large-scale co-operation.

What I have elsewhere called the ambiguous position of the lord as revealed in the 13th century custumals is quite compatible with continuous development from chieftainship of this sort. The lord is the titular owner of the wood and waste, but the community uses both. He provides whatever complex machinery is needed, such as the mill, but the community uses it, and pays him multure. His steward presides in the hallmote and takes its fees, but verdict is given by a jury of the villagers, finding their custom. The services on his demesne are supervised by the reeve, who is not an overseer of slaves but one of the villagers, often elected by them. At seedtime and harvest, they give him boon-plowings and boon reapings, *benes* such as they would give to any needy villager. These are said to be done as a favour to the lord, though precedent has come in time to make no distinction between what is customary and what is, in fact, exactable. At Christmas the villagers give him hens, which he distributes again, cooked, at the feast he holds in the hall for his tenants. Of course he gets, through his exchanges with his tenants, a larger income than any one of them — otherwise he would not be the lord — but his role, in Bloch's words, is less that of a modern landlord than that of first citizen of the commune — *le premier habitant*.[18]

All that was needed to turn an original village chieftainship into a medieval lordship of the manor was some overturn among the chiefs and their replacement, as in conquest, by outsiders less close, ethnically, to the natives, together with a little legal interpretation by clerks less familiar with the real situation than with concepts suitable to the Roman *fundus*. Remember what happened much later when the rights of a Highland chief over clan territory were assimilated to those of an English landlord over his estates. Once the manor becomes the legal framework of land holding, all estates can be cast, as they are in Domesday, into the manorial form, but even then, outside of the open-field areas, manorial revenue tends to take the form of rents in money and kind, whose collection depends far less on the existence of a strong community organization than does week-work on the demesne.

V

Thus a sociologist, looking at the interrelations of institutions in a social system, sees a *slowly* growing population, a weak commercial market in land, and a strong manorial organization with heavy labour services as more compatible with impartible inheritance, an open-field village community, and an original village chieftainship than with partible inheritance, joint-families settled in scattered hamlets, and a more remote, territorial chieftainship, if indeed any chieftainship at all. Whether or not this interpretation is more adequate than another, it will serve at least as an example of the kind of attack a sociologist might make on the problems of social history. Anyone, of course, might interpret the evidence thus, but a sociologist is more apt to do so.

One last word to the economic historians, in order to make explicit an assumption so far implicit, though no doubt evident enough, in what I have said. I am not asserting the primacy of so-called "social" factors over factors of economic or technical self-interest. That would lead to the worst kind of false dichotomy: the two — if they are two — are mutually dependent. I am not turning the usual economic argument upside down and saying that week-work produced the lord's interest rather than that the lord's interest produced week-work. But neither am I admitting that economic or technical interests are pursued in a vacuum — an assumption underlying the the theory once put forward — tentatively, to be sure — that the differences between medieval East Anglia and central England follow directly from the prevalence of sheep-farming in the former. At any given time, the interests of lord or tenant, like those of their descendents today, are partly determined by, and always pursued within, an institutional framework: what I have called social structure or organization. It makes a difference to the outcome of economic endeavour what sort of social organization it started in. It even makes a difference in the kinds of new institutions economic endeavour creates in place of the old.

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NOTES

[1] This essay is based on a public lecture given at the University of Cambridge, 6 March, 1953.

[2] Some of the useful authorities are: H. L. Gray, *English Field Systems*; D. C. Douglas, *The Social Structure of Medieval East Anglia* (Oxford Studies in Social and Legal History, Vol. IX); J. E. A. Jolliffe, *Pre-Feudal England: The Jutes*; G. C. Homans, *English Villagers of the 13th Century*.

[3] G. C. Homans, *English Villagers of the 13th Century*, p. 111.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 112.

[5] See, again, J. E. A. Jolliffe, *Pre-Feudal England: The Jutes.*

[6] See the evidence for partible inheritance in Norfolk at the end of the 12th century in B. Dodwell, ed., *Feet of Fines for the County of Norfolk*, 1198-1202, (Pipe Roll Soc., New Series, Vol. XXVII).

[7] R. Lennard, " The Economic Position of the Domesday *Villani*," *Economic Journal*, Vol. LVI (1946), pp. 244-261, and " The Economic Position of the Domesday Sokemen," *Economic Journal*, Vol. LVII (1947), pp. 179-195.

[8] The prevalence in Domesday of tenure in *parage* in the Jutish area of southern Hampshire suggests that the Jutes set up their joint-family organisation there too.

[9] R. G. Collingwood and J. N. L. Myres, *Roman Britain and the English Settlements.*

[10] Cited above, note 7.

[11] G. C. Homans, *English Villagers of the 13th century*, pp. 121-159.

[12] K. H. Connell, *Population of Ireland*: 1750-1845; C. M. Arensberg and S. T. Kimball, *Family and Community in Ireland.*

[13] See, among other possible examples, the custumal of Ogbourne St. George, Wilts., in M. Chibnall, ed., *Select Documents of the English Lands of the Abbey* of Bec, (Camden Third Series, Vol. LXXIII), pp. 29-36.

[14] M. Bloch, " The Rise of Dependent Cultivation and Seigniorial Institutions," in J. H. Clapham and E. Power, eds., *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe*, Vol. I, p. 264.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 264.

[16] *Ibid.*, pp. 260-271.

[17] See R. Firth, *We, The Tikopia* and *Primitive Polynesian Economy*, and the various books by B. Malinowski about the Trobriands, particularly *Coral Gardens and their Magic.*

[18] M. Bloch, *op. cit.*, p. 261. For the ambiguous position of the lord, see G. C. Homans, *English Villagers of the 13th Century*, pp. 339-349.

The Rebuilding of Rural England, 1570-1640

I

BETWEEN THE ACCESSION OF ELIZABETH I AND THE OUTBREAK OF THE Civil War, there occurred in England a revolution in the housing of a considerable part of the population. The evidence for this is more abundant in the rural districts than in the towns, where there has necessarily been more replacement of buildings during the past three hundred years. It is probable, however, that the Great Rebuilding was originally as noticeable in the towns as in the country, if we may judge by those English towns (such as Shrewsbury and Totnes) which retain much of their old character. The movement appears to have begun in the 1560s and was most conspicuous in the last generation of the sixteenth century and the first generation of the seventeenth — roughly between 1570 and 1640. If one wished to be more precise, one might put the years of greatest activity in building between 1575 and 1625 to judge by the dated examples from all parts of the country.

This revolution in English housing had two aspects. There was, first, the physical rebuilding or substantial modernisation of the medieval houses that had come down from the past; and there was, almost simultaneously, a remarkable increase in household furnishings and equipment. The rebuilding movement has remained unnoticed because historians, unlike archæologists, have yet to learn to look over hedges and to treat visual evidence as of equal value to documentary. Most of the evidence lies in the surviving buildings themselves, but once we recognize it for what it is the necessary documentary evidence is forthcoming. As for the evidence for the improvement in fittings and furnishings, it is derived in the main from the documents, chiefly the inventories of personal estate deposited in various probate registries all over the country.

The Great Rebuilding is remarkable enough to call for the attention of economic historians. Who financed this housing revolution, and from what sources? Is it connected in any way with the marked rise in population — either as cause or as effect — that is apparent in the same period? The answers to these questions must necessarily be partly speculative at this stage, for a great deal of work remains to be done especially on the subject of population. It is the purpose of this essay to suggest the causes of the rebuilding and some of its possible effects, with particular reference to rural England. The rebuilding of the towns is less well evidenced, and is a more complex

movement, varying in character from town to town. It is remarkable indeed how little we know about the physical growth of the English towns, apart from some recent studies of the growth of London. Here is a rich unploughed field for the economic and social historian.

Since the evidence for the Great Rebuilding has nowhere been collected together, it may be useful to do so here before examining the economic history that lies behind it, and we may begin, in the classic manner of most English travellers, with Cornwall. In the South-West of England the evidence from both Cornwall and Devon is striking. Richard Carew, writing his *Survey of Cornwall* in the 1580s, describes the houses of the husbandmen within his own time thus: " walles of earth, low thatched roofes, few partitions, no planchings or glasse windowes, and scarcely any chimnies, other than a hole in the wall to let out the smoke: their bed, straw and a blanket: as for sheets, so much linnen cloth had not yet stepped over the narrow channell, between them and *Brittaine* (i.e. Brittany). To conclude, a mazer and a panne or two, comprised all their substance: but now most of these fashions are universally banished, and the Cornish husbandman conformethe himselfe with a better supplied civilitie to the Easterne patterne . . . ."[1]

In Devon, none of the early topographers noticed these changes among the peasantry: Carew was exceptionally observant. But a personal inspection of the 430 or so medieval parishes of Devon brings to light overwhelming evidence of the rebuilding or substantial reconstruction of farmhouses, large and small, all over the county. Not a single parish is without some evidence of this building activity; scores of parishes contain several good examples. A complete list of farmhouses which owe their present structure in whole or in substantial part to Elizabethan or Jacobean builders would run to many hundreds, possibly a thousand examples.[2] The Great Rebuilding is very evident also throughout Somerset and most of Dorset.

In a great number of examples in South-Western England we find, not a complete rebuilding from the ground up, but the " modernisation " of a fifteenth-century hall-house. This reconstruction usually took the form of inserting a ceiling in the medieval hall, formerly open to the rafters, so producing a living room and parlour on the ground floor and bedrooms above. This necessitated in turn the making of a staircase leading to the bedrooms, itself a major structural alteration. Further partitions divided the larger medieval rooms into smaller ones, and more windows and fireplaces were then required. The principal rooms were often given elaborate plaster ceilings (and sometimes plaster mantelpieces) and were usually wainscotted. By the time the reconstruction was done, the house appeared externally and internally to be c. 1600 in date, and only a

close inspection reveals the essential structure of the medieval house still remaining.

In the Household Book written by Robert Furse, a Devonshire yeoman, in 1593, we have a rare documentary reference to such a reconstruction. He tells us that after succeeding to his modest estate in 1572, he made the porch and entry to his ancestral house, ceiled the hall, and glazed the windows.[3] The house also had a massive granite newel stair in the back wall which probably dated from the same time (1572-93). The body of the house (now destroyed) was of fifteenth-century date.

Another documentary reference comes from Harwell, in northern Berkshire, where Robert Loder farmed in the early seventeenth century. His accounts for the year 1618 suggest that in that year he made a similar reconstruction of an older house. He speaks of "Money layd out aboute my Chimney . . . (and) making my staires, my window & selling (ceiling) & plastering."[4] The cost of this work, and the time taken over it, make it clear that this was no ordinary repair but a substantial modernisation of an older house.

Moving on from South-Western England, it is a well-known fact that a great part of the beautiful farmhouse building of the Cotswold Stone Belt, extending north-eastwards from eastern Somerset, through Gloucestershire and Northants, into Rutland and Lincolnshire, can be dated between 1570 and 1640. There are probably more dated houses in this oolitic limestone than in any other English stone, and the evidence in the villages along this two-hundred mile belt is unmistakable. The narrower belt of tawny ironstone or marlstone which adjoins the oolitic limestone for almost the whole of its length is similarly rich in minor domestic building of this period.

Elsewhere in the East Midlands, the clay lands of Leicestershire show considerable evidence of the same period of rebuilding, though here there has been more destruction in the villages, partly because clay-and-timber decay more readily than stone and partly because the industrialisation of the villages has led to much Victorian and Edwardian replacement in red brick. Nevertheless, a good deal remains, and the evidence of household inventories is conclusive about the enlargement of farmhouses and to a lesser extent of cottages at this time.[5] In the adjoining counties of Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire, the researches of Mr. M. W. Barley show in detail how extensive was the Great Rebuilding in this part of England, not only in the stone districts but in the claylands also.[6]

In Eastern England, the evidence has yet to be examined in detail, but is nevertheless suggestive. In Essex "the wave of rebuilding was at its height between 1590 and 1640." Mr. F. W. Steer describes the principal structural changes that were taking place in farmhouses

and cottages all over the county.[7] In Suffolk the visual evidence is equally striking but has yet to be worked out on the documentary side. At Monewden, a scattered parish in the clay belt south of the upper Deben, one finds, for example, three adjacent farmhouses along the Otley road, all excellent examples of Elizabethan yeoman-houses. One is dated 1592, another 1593; the third is undated but is undoubtedly of the same years.[8] There is also much work of the period 1570-1640 in Southern Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire.

In the West Midlands and along the Welsh border, the characteristic " black-and-white " timber-framed houses are very largely the product of the same building period between 1570 and 1640. A few of these houses, especially in the towns, date from the fifteenth century, but the great majority belong to the period we are considering.[9] The smaller houses of Monmouthshire have recently been studied intensively by Sir Cyril Fox and Lord Raglan, who reveal the importance of the Great Rebuilding here, above all the fundamental change in character and mode of construction that took place about 1560.[10] This purely archæological evidence again tallies exactly with the documentary evidence from other parts of England.

For southern and south-eastern England, one has no evidence, though cursory journeys through Kent and Sussex suggest that ample evidence of late sixteenth-early seventeenth century building activity would be forthcoming if an intensive study were made. The topographical volumes of the Victoria County History for Sussex point in the same direction.[11]

Lastly, there is Northern England, for which the evidence is patchy but sufficient. On the Yorkshire side: " everywhere throughout the Dales we can still see the sturdy dwellings built at the end of the sixteenth and in the early part of the seventeenth centuries, with the initials of their proud owners and the date of erection carved on the ornate lintel above the door. Many were merely transformations into stone of the earlier timber and wattle structures, but others developed a structural plan characteristic of the period and the new medium."[12] No one has yet studied the rest of Yorkshire. One may confidently expect to find the same kind of evidence in other parts of the county, though in the East and North Ridings the rebuilding of the eighteenth century may be more important.

On the Lancashire side, Whitaker, in his great *History of Whalley*, tells us that a similar wave of rebuilding in stone was visible on the western slopes of the Pennines. " So lived our yeomanry and smaller gentry of old! and such, probably, their houses continued, down to the beginning of Elizabeth when, the forests and the old houses being generally decayed together, and a period of great tranquillity commencing, a general spirit of stone-building in this

rank began, especially in the neighbourhood of Burnley . . ."[13] The historian of Burnley enlarges upon this: " there was much building activity in the district near the end of the sixteenth century; new ' Halls ' were erected and old farmsteads were reconstructed." The ' halls ' were the houses of the lesser gentry — what we might call the peasant-gentry for they were, like the minor gentry of South-Western England, descended for the most part from peasant freeholders of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries — but the yeomen show the same tendency to rebuild in stone and on a larger scale than their old houses.[14] Other Lancashire parishes show the same kind of building activity. Though much has been destroyed in and near the industrial towns, a sturdy old farmhouse of this period can not infrequently be found standing incongruously in a back street of an industrial suburb.

In the Lake District, the rebuilding seems to have been most active at a somewhat later date — from the last decade of the seventeenth century onwards — and one notices this, too, to some extent in the upper dales of western Yorkshire. Indeed, the great period of rebuilding in the four most northerly counties of England is the eighteenth century. Any earlier building activity is not much in evidence here. But elsewhere in England, from Cornwall up to Lancashire, and from Herefordshire across to Suffolk, the evidence for the Great Rebuilding between 1570 and 1640 is abundant and inescapable. Harrison's well-known words about " the multitude of chimneys lately erected " reflect the most immediately visible sign of the new housing standards.

II

The Great Rebuilding, as we have seen, took two forms — either a complete rebuilding of the old house (possibly in a new material and a new style) or a reconstruction and enlargement on such a scale as to make it virtually a new house. A third type of building should perhaps be added. It is not a rebuilding or a reconstruction, but building for the first time on a new site. This new building seems to have been confined almost entirely to cottages. Though there was a renewed colonisation of the waste lands in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and new farmsteads came into existence on the more inclement uplands, the amount of new building of this kind was relatively small. We find some, for example, on the moors and heaths of Mid- and East Devon,[15] and we find some in the Lancashire forest of Rossendale, which was being opened up rapidly after the middle of the sixteenth century. Thus a commission of enquiry in 1561 reported, among many encroachments, " one house or barn containing three baies built on Haslingden waste," and " one mansion howse containing two baies and one other house and half an acre of

land encroached." But most of the new building reported in 1616 consisted only of cottages, smithies, kilns, turf-houses, barns and such-like.[16] Here in Rossendale we should have found a few Elizabethan farmhouses built upon the waste; but mostly we should have seen the smaller and more primitive buildings of squatters.

In addition to this new building upon the wastes, there was a considerable amount of cottage-building in the lowlands generally, more activity than there had been since the thirteenth century. The preamble to the well-known act of 31 Elizabeth, ordaining that no person might henceforth build a cottage (except under licence) unless he assigned to it at least four acres of land, speaks of " the erecting and building of great numbers and multitudes of cottages, which are daily more and more increased in many parts of this realm."

From the Isle of Axholme in Lincolnshire we have some specific details of the amount of cottage-building that had gone on there. On the manor of Epworth and in the townships of Belton, Haxey, Westwood, and Owston, it was said in 1630 that no fewer than a hundred new cottages had been built within the past forty years. In 1596 it was said that thirty new cottages had been built at Misterton (just south of the Isle) in the past forty years. At Crowle, at the northern end of the Isle, it was agreed in 1576 that the population had increased by forty householders, great and small, during the preceding forty years.[17]

Though the building activity of the years 1570-1640 was very considerable, almost everywhere south of the four northern counties of Cumberland, Westmorland, Northumberland, and Durham, not every yeoman, husbandman, and cottager found himself in a new or enlarged house. Most yeomen certainly did, possibly a great number of husbandmen; probably few cottagers. But almost all the rural population except the poorest enjoyed a higher level of domestic comfort, in the way of furniture, fittings, and household equipment on the eve of the Civil War than their grandparents had done seventy years earlier., This is " the great amendment of lodging " of which William Harrison also speaks in his Description of England, and of which he gives examples. The household inventories of Leicestershire farmers and cottagers reveal a substantial increase in domestic comforts of all kinds during the reign of Elizabeth I. So, too, do those of the Fenland farmers, even allowing for the general rise of prices.[18] The mere list of contents of farmhouses and cottages in the late sixteenth century and early seventeenth is sufficiently conclusive; there is more of everything and better of everything, and new-fangled comforts (like cushions and hangings) as well. Probably all parts of England, except the still primitive northern farms, would show this advance in domestic comforts if the household

inventories were examined. The houses themselves were warmer, lighter, and larger: more fireplaces, windows glazed for the first time,[19] more rooms and more differentiation between them: kitchens took away the cooking and eating from the hall or house-place, bedrooms took away the sleepers, and the farm " offices " similarly multiplied. All this affected yeomen and husbandmen principally, but there is some evidence to show that labourers, in the open-field Midlands at least, benefitted considerably also.[20]

III

The causes of this revolution in housing standards are in part not hard to discover. The fundamental cause is not so easy to diagnose; but whatever this may have been (and we shall return to this point later) the timing of the revolution and the means by which it was carried out can be readily explained.

We start from the fact that a great deal, perhaps most, of the rebuilding and substantial reconstruction of this period was the work of freeholders — the bigger husbandmen, the yeomen, and the lesser gentry, all largely of the same social origin in medieval centuries.[21] The authors of *Monmouthshire Houses* came to this conclusion in their territory;[22] it is certainly so in Devon, where the freeholders constituted nearly one-fifth of the rural tenantry in the sixteenth century, and where even today it is possible to identify their houses by the hundred; and it was so in the neighbourhood of Burnley in Lancashire and in Whalley generally. One finds it in Leicestershire also; and there can be little doubt that were we able to identify the initials on the hundreds of Elizabethan and Jacobean farmhouses in the oolitic limestone belt (as we could do in a great number of instances, given time) we should find that they, too, were almost entirely the names of freeholders. It is, I think, generally true all over England.

This being so, the timing of this Great Rebuilding is easily explained. We are dealing with a class who, from the 1540s onwards, were in the happy position of having relatively fixed expenses and steadily rising selling-prices. They had absolute security of tenure, and their chief rents, fixed centuries earlier, were nominal and unalterable. Their labour costs rose during the century, but wages lagged well behind prices and a substantial conversion to pasture-farming would keep even labour costs down. There is no need to specify the rises in the prices of agricultural products: they are well known to economic historians. It is enough to say that the gap between costs and selling-prices widened with increasing speed after the middle of the sixteenth century and persisted down to the Civil War. No yeoman with his wits about him could fail to accumulate money-savings on a scale hitherto unknown.

For a time the freeholder cautiously invested his new gains in the rectorial tithes of his own or a neighbouring parish, increased his flocks and herds, and rented new pastures; he spent nothing on ostentatious display. Not until the 1560s, and more especially the last quarter of the century, do we find him embarking upon the rebuilding or the enlargement of his house. Now there is money to spare for the graces of living.

This new abundance of money was becoming evident even by Harrison's time (1577). Speaking of the old days, but within the memory of men yet living, he says:

> Such also was their poverty that, if some one odd farmer or husbandman had been at the ale-house, a thing greatly used in those days, amongst six or seven of his neighbours, and there in a bravery, to shew what store he had, did cast down his purse, and therein a noble or six shillings in silver, unto them (for few such men then cared for gold, because it was not so ready payment, and they were oft enforced to give a penny for the exchange of an angel), it was very likely that all the rest could not lay down so much against it; whereas in my time, although peradventure four pounds of old rent be improved to forty, fifty or a hundred pounds yet will the farmer, as another palm or date tree, think his gains very small towards the end of his term if he have not six or seven years' rent lying by him, therewith to purchase a new lease, beside a fair garnish of pewter on his cupboard, with so much more in odd vessels going about the house, three or four feather beds, so many coverlets and carpets of tapestry, a silver salt, a bowl for wine, (if not a whole nest), and a dozen of spoons to furnish up the suit.[23]

The truth of Harrison's general observations is borne out by a study of the inventories of one Midland village — Wigston Magna in Leicestershire — which reveals how rare and how small were the sums of ready money before the middle of the sixteenth century. Gradually one finds more and more money in the yeoman's coffers as the reign of Elizabeth draws to its close. By the early seventeenth century fairly substantial sums of money were changing hands between peasant families in Wigston marriage settlements — sums ranging from £100 to £300.[24]

Harrison speaks of money being available for new leases. There is a remarkable instance of this from Devon, where leases for ninety-nine years or three lives were general by the early seventeenth century. These called for a heavy fine upon entry and thereafter a very small reserved rent. In 1660, a yeoman of Farway paid £570 for such a lease, and the squire reduced this by £15 " because he paid £250 of his fine in Golde."[25] As far back as the 1580s, Carew had noticed that men were falling over themselves in Cornwall to get such long leases, paying fines amounting to ten or twelve times the annual value of the land. He, too, refers to the larger store of coinage " than our ancestors enjoyed."[26]

It was not only the yeoman-freeholders and the lesser gentry who enjoyed the unearned increment of these years. Many yeomen and husbandmen who owned no land, but rented all they had from a

landlord, were similarly well placed. Even with leases or copyholds they might enjoy a security of tenure hardly less than that of freeholders. Uncertain fines and uncertain copyhold did not necessarily mean extortion or eviction. In a sample of eighty manors in East Anglia, Mr. Spratt found uncertain fines on no fewer than forty-six, but no evidence that they were being raised to exorbitant rates. And in Devon we find a small landlord — a yeoman hovering on the edge of the gentry — counselling those who come after him about the treatment of tenants: " Burden them not with more fines, rents, or services more than they be well able to pay you: displease not an honest friendly tenant for a trifle or small sum of money."[27]

We must never forget that the legal records of the sixteenth and and early seventeenth centuries, which offer such abundant evidence about extortionate and browbeating landlords, are by their very nature a pathological source. (One could with equal facility compile a study of sexual life in the twentieth century from the columns of the *News of the World*). We naturally hear little or nothing about landlords, great as well as small, whose creed was that of Robert Furse above; but I am inclined to think these were the rule rather than the exception. (Nor must we forget that tenants, merely by virtue of being tenants, are not necessarily arrayed in spotless white). At any rate, a considerable number of leaseholders and copyholders enjoyed both security of tenure and a share in the unearned increment that developed between old rents and new prices. Again the household inventories make it clear that husbandmen participated in the general advance of the farming class, though possibly on a lower level than the freeholders, and were able to take long leases with a considerable entry fine, to improve their household furnishings, and to enlarge or modernise their houses.

How much ready money was required to meet the cost of rebuilding or modernisation? It is not easy to come by figures relating to farmhouses and cottages, but such information as there is for the late sixteenth century suggests that an average-sized farmhouse — say one of three bays — might cost in the region of £20 to £30.

We have some figures for a somewhat earlier period. A farmhouse in Holywell, on the edge of Oxford, was erected for £29 in 1516 at the instance of Merton College, the college providing the building materials; but this farmhouse was much larger and probably better finished than the average. A church house at Great Sherston in Wiltshire — sixty feet by nineteen feet, and sixteen feet high, a good substantial stone building — cost £10 in 1511. A timber house of three bays at Gloucester in 1483 cost £14, and a smaller house (mostly of cob) at Exeter in 1478 cost £8. At Nottingham in 1479 a house of three bays — probably a timber frame with mud walls, the same type as the Exeter house — was reckoned to cost £6.[28]

These prices must be regarded as providing only a rough indication of the cost of building an ordinary house, for so much depended on the nearness of a quarry or good oak-timber; but perhaps one may say that where a farmer had stone on his land or oak-timber (and most freeholders had one or the other) he could have built himself an average-sized farmhouse for £6 to £15 in the late fifteenth century or early sixteenth.[29]

By the 1580s there is some indication that building costs had trebled, for at Leicester in 1587 it was reckoned that the cost of rebuilding the decayed houses of "the late gilds" would be £6 a bay.[30] Thus a Leicester house of three bays would have cost about £18 as against £6 for a Nottingham house of the same size a century earlier.

The costs of building continued to rise throughout the early seventeenth century. We are told in 1654 that an Essex farmhouse — a quite typical one in size and plan — which had been burnt to the ground would cost near £40 to rebuild.[31] When Robert Loder modernised his farmhouse at Harwell in Berkshire in 1618 it seems to have cost him just under £40.[32] Although credit was long in the country, and masons and carpenters might not expect to be paid for many months, it is clear from figures like this that the rebuilding or enlargement of one's house in the period of 1570-1640 was a major capital investment, not as formidable an operation as in the twentieth century, for various reasons, but still one requiring a good deal of ready money; and it was not until the 1570s that ordinary folk could lay their hands upon the necessary amount for this purpose. For many of them perhaps not until the new century had dawned.

The money savings originating from the gap between relatively fixed expenses and rapidly rising farm-prices were the means by which the housing revolution was carried through. But the unwonted accumulation of ready money, though it may explain the accretion of household comforts and luxuries, is not a sufficient explanation in itself for the vast rebuilding and modernisation that went on in these two generations. We must look for a more fundamental cause. Is it connected in any way with the marked increase of population that one finds in many parts of England in the last quarter of the sixteenth century and the early years of the seventeenth? Is this rising population the cause of the revolution in housing standards, or is it the effect?

Until much more research has been done on English population-data in the sixteenth century one can only answer these questions tentatively. I incline to the view that the increase of population was, in the first place, an effect of the great improvement in housing standards. In due course it became a cause for the enlargement of houses and much new building; but initially I think it was an effect.

We must look for the cause of the Great Rebuilding in the filtering down to the mass of the population, after some two centuries, of a sense of privacy that had formerly been enjoyed only by the upper classes. Privacy demands more rooms, devoted to specialised uses: so we get in the Elizabethan yeoman's house the kitchen, the buttery, the best parlour, two or three separate bedrooms, the servants' chamber, besides the truncated medieval hall now shorn of many of its functions; and to achieve all this in a house of moderate size we have two floors instead of one. Lewis Mumford is right when he says that " the first radical change, which was to destroy the form of the medieval dwelling house, was the development of a sense of privacy," and hence the notion that instead of a common hall and a small parlour or bower, which was good enough for the medieval farmer, there should be more rooms: smaller rooms perhaps, but each devoted to a specialised use, representing a withdrawal from the common life. One can see this desire for withdrawal reflected, even in farmhouses, in the increasing use of the chair instead of the bench.

Privacy was not achieved all at once. At first it is only the yeoman or the husbandman who occupies the chair, at the head of the table, then the mistress, and gradually — over many generations perhaps — others in the family get their chairs. Similarly, in the early phase of the upper floor, only the master and mistress have a bedroom which is truly private, reached by only one door; all the other bedrooms open off each other, so that to reach the end of the house one has to pass through all the bedrooms except the master's. Later, however, this semi-public arrangement is replaced by a passage or corridor along the back wall of the house, off which all the bedroom doors open separately. But an early element in the achievement of privacy is the separation of the servants' quarters from those of the family.

In Italy, among the peasant population — or the more well-to-do section of it — the long, low, single-storied house had prevailed down to the end of the fourteenth century. During the fifteenth century we find a complete change of type: a more compact house, with more rooms, on two floors instead of one.[33] This new type reached France during the early sixteenth century, and England (I am speaking of the larger peasantry) by the last quarter of the century. The English squire had rebuilt his house to the new pattern during the fifteenth century or the early sixteenth; by the 1560s the wealthier yeomen were copying the new pattern on their own level; by the early 1600s a considerable part of the rural population, above the cottager level, were following suit. Thus, even in 1570, John Welshe, a wealthy Leicestershire yeoman, had a house of nine rooms (excluding three which were really " farm offices," though they took

more of the work out of the house proper — the boulting-house, the dairy, and the kiln-house).[34] The houses of wealthy merchants in the towns show the same multiplication of rooms in this period and perhaps a little earlier.[35] By the mid-seventeenth century the typical farmer's house had three to six rooms, rising to eight to ten among the bigger yeomen.[36]

It is likely that the development of this new type of house, with its small, separate rooms, was made possible technically by two contemporary improvements: the greatly increased use of coal for domestic heating after the middle of the sixteenth century (though this only applies to perhaps half of England: the other half went on burning wood), and the increased production of cheap glass which made its use possible in ordinary houses for the first time. So the new rooms could be warmed more easily, and there could be more and larger windows. More warmth; more light; more space and better ventilation; more privacy.

When we suggest that this type of house was responsible, at least in part, for the marked (even remarkable) increase of population during the second half of the sixteenth century, and above all perhaps in the last quarter of the century, we are entering upon a highly speculative field of enquiry. Yet the historian should not ignore it merely because he can see little hope of proving his case statistically, and because he is aware of treading on ground where even a contemporary Royal Commission goes cautiously.

As to the increase of population in rural England, we have already had some striking evidence from the Isle of Axholme and parishes bordering upon it. At Wigston Magna (Leics.) there were about 70 families in 1524, 80 in 1563, and between 120 and 130 in 1603: at the most conservative estimate a rise of fifty per cent. in the forty years 1563-1603. A good deal of this can be shown to arise from immigration into the parish, but well over a half of it is a natural increase.[37] In the towns, the increases are even more striking. The population of Plymouth more than doubled in the last quarter of the century; Bideford more than doubled in the fifty years 1560-1610; Tiverton more than doubled between 1560 and 1620. At Birmingham there were about forty baptisms a year in the 1560s, and 70 in the decade 1600-10.[38]

This is, indeed, sketchy evidence, and it might be argued that all the towns cited above are special cases, subject to a good deal of immigration on top of their natural increase in numbers. It must be said forthwith that the subject calls for much more intensive study upon a wider scale: there is ample material for it. Pending this larger enquiry, one can only say that the evidence of wills in this period seems to point to a steadily increasing population, to flocks of children and grandchildren. One has heard so much of the high

infant mortality of medieval and later periods, and of the supposed conditions of social health and hygiene to account for it, that one reads with surprise in the documents of the extraordinary number of children who nevertheless survived the perils of infancy, grew up and married, and had large broods of their own; and one begins to suspect that these easy generalisations about mortality-rates in past centuries need some re-examination, especially for the three generations between about 1560 and 1640, if no more.

The wills of Wigston Magna people, in the last decades of the sixteenth century and the early part of the seventeenth, teem with children and grandchildren. Robert Croson (1585) left two sons and six daughters. John Smith, in the same year, refers to the seven children of his son Thomas and the five children of his son William. William Chamberlain in 1587 left five sons and three daughters, Robert Browne three sons and four daughters. In 1581 Walter Clarke left behind him seven sons and daughters, and William Symon six children in the same year. Six, seven, or eight growing children in the family were the general rule in the 1580s, and it is possible that in the next generation this number still further increased. My own ancestor, Thomas Hoskins, a Dorset yeoman, had five sons and five daughters between 1550 and 1580, most of whom grew up to marriage. One of his five sons, George, similarly had five sons and five daughters between 1584 and 1603, all of whom grew up and married and had families of their own in Dorset and Devon. More families could profitably be studied in this way: the economic and social historian would derive valuable material from such an enquiry. Possibly the farmers and rural families generally were tougher than the nobility and gentry, whose church monuments at this period certainly suggest a high infant mortality.

We know the number of children begotten by the poorer clergy in Leicestershire in the early seventeenth century — a class differing in no essential respect from the ordinary village families. The vicar of Cosby pleaded to the tax collector in 1614-5 that he had thirteen children living upon his meagre stipend; the parson of Enderby had ten; the vicar of Peatling twelve, the rector of Knaptoft twelve. The rector of Peckleton had " ten children and an innocent expending upon my small maintenance."[39] The typical late Elizabethan and Jacobean family, in the country at any rate, resembled nothing so much as the typical Victorian household. Both periods were ones of prolific and on the whole successful child-bearing, with little to choose between them in numbers.

This plethora of children is most noticeable in the last twenty years of the sixteenth century and the first quarter of the seventeenth, and one cannot be dogmatic about its causes. It is possible that the fertility-rate rose towards the end of the Elizabethan period; it is

likely that the infant mortality-rate (and perhaps maternal mortality also) fell sharply below the level of the medieval and sub-medieval period at the same time. Possibly both factors were at work together. Whatever the dominant factor, it seems probable that the better and more varied food consumed by the mass of the population after the middle of the century, and the simultaneous increase in house-room, in comfort, and in living conditions generally, must have had a cumulative effect in raising the vitality and resistance of the population of the country, especially in the rural districts, and were major factors in the increase of population in these years. Harrison comments on the great improvement in English gardens and garden produce, and the introduction of many more varieties of fruit, during the preceding forty years. Medicinal herbs especially had come in extensively in these years, and must have had some effect on the standard of health. Most important of all, perhaps, was the fact that by the 1580s people were getting married earlier. Carew draws attention to this in Cornwall, but no doubt it was true of most of the country; and this alone would account for any increase there may have been in the fertility of marriages.

So far as infant mortality is concerned the figures from the semi-rural parish of St. Thomas, just outside Exeter, are very suggestive. The infant mortality-rate was as low as 117 in the period 1563-1600; by 1677-1720, with the increasing congestion of suburban building, it had risen to 167, and by 1736-60 to 181.[40] It seems likely that in the second half of the sixteenth century the infant mortality rate in England, in the rural and semi-rural areas at any rate, was reduced to a figure not achieved again until well on into the nineteenth century, and that this alone would account for a considerable part of the natural increase in the population in the Elizabethan period. And the same factors that reduced infant mortality almost certainly reduced maternal mortality also — more fresh food, greater house-room, more warmth and ventilation, and a greater domestic cleanliness — and so effected a double saving of life. By the middle of the seventeenth century this increased population, housed to a large extent by means of new building on the open spaces of the Elizabethan village,[41] produced a new congestion with all its attendant health problems, and these great advantages were slowly lost. The favourable trends were reversed and a century of endemic sickness set in; but this is going beyond our immediate subject. The sequence in England seems to be: Savings — rebuilding and enlargement — decreased mortality and perhaps higher fertility — rise of population — new building and development of congestion — rise in mortality rates. But this is a large thesis which awaits a detailed enquiry.

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NOTES

[1] Carew, *Survey of Cornwall* (1723 ed.), 66b.

[2] For many specific examples see my *Devon*.

[3] *Trans. Devonshire Association*, xxvi (1894), 181.

[4] *Robert Loder's Farm Accounts*, 1610-20, ed. G. E. Fussell (Camden Soc. Third Series, liii (1936)), 157-8.

[5] County Record Office, Leicester: inventories of personal estate. For the housing changes in a typical village see my *Essays in Leicestershire History*, 58-65.

[6] A summary of Mr. Barley's evidence and conclusions will appear in a forthcoming number of the Economic History Review.

[7] F. W. Steer (ed.) *Farm and Cottage Inventories of Mid-Essex*, 1635-1749, 9-10.

[8] I owe this example to the kindness of Mr. Norman Scarfe, who has studied the Suffolk countryside in great detail.

[9] For Herefordshire, see the three volumes of the *Royal Commission on Historical Monuments*. Though the Commision makes the barest mention of this minor domestic building, the evidence about it can be extracted with some patience.

[10] *Monmouthshire Houses*: Part I (Medieval), Part II (Sub-Medieval), published by the National Museum of Wales. Part II covers the period *c.* 1550-1610.

[11] See, for example, vol. iv. 126-7, under the parish of Westbourne.

[12] James Walton, *Homesteads of the Yorkshire Dales*, 32.

[13] Whitaker, *History of Whalley*, 4th ed. revised, ii, 572.

[14] Bennett, History of Burnley, ii, 64, 248. See the *Life of Adam Martindale* (Chetham Society, 1845), 1-2, for details of such a rebuilding by a Lancashire yeoman some time before 1623.

[15] See, for Devon, some examples in Hoskins and Finberg, *Devonshire Studies*, 328-9.

[16] Tupling, *The Economic History of Rossendale*, 47, 62, 64, 66-7.

[17] I owe these examples to the kindness of Dr. Joan Thirsk, whose article on The Isle of Axholme before Vermuyden will appear shortly in the Agricultural History Review.

[18] *Essays in Leicestershire History*, 59-60, 135-6, 179-80. Dr. Thirsk, in *Fenland Farming in the Sixteenth Century*, Table VII, shows that the median value of the Fenland farmers' personal estates nearly quadrupled between the 1530s and 1590-1.

[19] The glazing of windows in well-to-do houses in Leicester appears in the 1570s, in the Leicestershire villages perhaps 20-30 years later. In East Anglia, always an advanced region, these dates may be somewhat earlier. There were three glaziers at work in King's Lynn in the 1540s.

[20] I have collected together some of the evidence for labourers' estates at this period in an unpublished work on The Midland Peasant.

[21] See, for example, *Devon*, 58-9, 64, 71, 77-9, 90.

[22] Fox and Raglan, op. cit., 13.

[23] Quoted in J. Dover Wilson, *Life in Shakespeare's England* (Pelican ed.), 211-12.

[24] The Midland Peasant, ch. VII.

[25] *Devon*, 92. The earliest lease for 99 years or three lives that I have come across in Devon is dated 1575. Within a generation they had become the usual method of dealing with leasehold land.

[26] Carew, *Survey of Cornwall* (1723 ed.), 37.

[27] Mr. Spratt's conclusions are quoted in Campbell, *The English Yeoman*, 135; Robert Furse's advice in *Trans. Devon. Assoc.*, xxvi, 172.

[28] The Nottingham reference comes from the printed borough records; all the others are contract prices quoted in Salzman, *Building in England*, 540-1, 542, 561-2, 570-1.

[29] This range of costs may seem unsatisfactorily wide, but it is not surprising when we discover that cottages built on the same estate in Northamptonshire between 1295 and 1306 cost anything from ten to thirty shillings each, the average price being just over sixteen shillings. (*Estate Book of Henry de Bray*, ed. Dorothy Willis, Camden Society, Third Series, xxvii, 49-51).

[30] *Leicester Borough Records*, iii, 239-40.

[31] Steer, op. cit., 11.

[32] *Robert Loder's Farm Accounts*, loc. cit. The accounts are not entirely clear on this point but a sum of £36 10s. 6d. or £37 17s. 6d. seems to be indicated.

[33] I am indebted to some remarks by Prof. Cipolla of the University of Pavia for this information.

[34] MS. Inventory, Leicester County Record Office.

[35] See, for example, the household inventories of rich Newcastle merchants published in the *Surtees Society*, vols. 2 and 38, *Wills and Inventories*.

[36] Campbell, *The English Yeoman*, 230.

[37] The Midland Peasant, ch. XI. About 19 of the increase of 40 to 50 families were immigrants.

[38] The figures for Plymouth, Bideford, and Tiverton are based upon an examination of the parish registers. That for Birmingham is given in Gill, *History of Birmingham*, i, 42.

[39] *Essays in Leicestershire History*, 18-19.

[40] Pickard, *The Population and Epidemics of Exeter in pre-census times*, 81-2.

[41] This is truer of open-field England than of the enclosed regions. In the former the existence of the arable fields and the rights of common pasture over them prevented any outward expansion of the built-up area as in a modern village. The result was that the gardens, orchards, crofts, and other open spaces had to be taken for new building and older houses had to be divided. Either way, congestion resulted, and problems of water-supply and sanitation were exacerbated.

Britain's Informal Empire in Argentina, 1806-1914

IT IS A COMMONPLACE OF POLITICAL SCIENCE THAT THE COMMERCIAL, industrial and financial expansion of the Great Powers during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was accompanied by a growing political tension both among the Great Powers themselves and between the economically less well-developed communities of the world and the modern industrialized nations of Europe and the United States. The frequent intervals of tension in the relations of Great Britain with India, Egypt and China are examples of this second class. Contemporaneously, Argentina was also among the less well-developed communities of the world. Its economic connection with Great Britain was constant and of the highest importance between the years 1806 and 1914. For Great Britain, Argentina (at least during the years 1880-1914) was more important than Egypt or China and, perhaps, even than India as a source of foodstuffs and raw materials, a market and a place for the investment of capital. But, compared with the tension of Anglo-Egyptian relations, for example, Anglo-Argentine political relations were notable for a low temperature and a seeming relaxation. To suggest tentatively some of the reasons for this relative absence of political tension in spite of a large and important Anglo-Argentine economic interest is the purpose of this paper.

Great Powers have generally employed four methods of achieving that subordination of less developed communites which is the essential characteristic of an imperialist relationship: (1) conquest; (2) intervention with the object of establishing a provisional government of native peoples capable of implementing policies agreeable to the interventionist power; (3) the acceptance with varying degrees of consent by the weaker nation of advisory officers directing the policies of the weaker state; (4) the establishment in the weaker community of extra-territorial privileges, naval and military bases, and special areas where the commercial laws and policies of the stronger power prevail. The first three methods of achieving the subordination of Argentina to Great Britain were attempted or proposed in the course of the nineteenth century. All these either failed or were rejected because, as the Under Secretary of the Foreign Office told one advocate of intervention in 1891, they were beset with " manifest difficulties or impossibilities."[1]

What were these manifest difficulties and impossibilities? In terms of manpower, wealth, military, naval and diplomatic experience

Great Britain was a stronger power than Argentina. But not necessarily in the Río de la Plata. In 1806 an unauthorized filibustering expedition organised by Commodore Sir Home Popham attempted the conquest of the Viceroyalty of Buenos Aires. Popham commanded the ships of the Royal Navy, and the land forces were under the leadership of a man who subsequently became one of Wellington's field marshals. The Spanish forces were insignificant in numbers and commanded (this is hardly the word for the activity of the Spanish Viceroy, the Marquis of Sobremonte) with incredible incompetence and pusilanimity. But the filibustering expedition was completely defeated. So was the official and much larger expeditionary force despatched to Montevideo and Buenos Aires in 1807. In 1845 Lord Aberdeen, in an ill-judged abandonment of the then established British policy of non-intervention in the domestic affairs and international relations of South American States, consented to a joint Anglo-French naval expedition designed to break the Argentine blockade of the River Plate. The result was instructive. It was demonstrated that Britannia did not rule the waves of the Río de la Plata, and in 1849 the British Government signed a treaty by the terms of which all vessels seized from Argentina were to be returned in good order and the British naval ships in South American waters obliged to salute the Argentine flag with 21 guns in ceremonial acknowledgement of Argentine sovereignty.[2] Thus ended the last overt attempt by Great Britain to employ violence in Anglo-Argentine relations.

It does not follow that Argentina's location and the military prowess of her people doomed all efforts at forcible subordination to failure. The absence of violence from Anglo-Argentine relations was not alone due to the fact that there were certain inherent physical difficulties in its use.

The British invasion of Buenos Aires in 1806 was a truly private enterprise undertaken on the initiative of the British commander of the naval squadron which accompanied the force despatched to the Cape of Good Hope to seize Cape Town from the Dutch. Popham was commercially-minded. He had already been court-martialled for alleged overcharges for the repair of a ship of war. He knew that the British Government had on numerous occasions contemplated, in collaboration with the revolutionary, Miranda, blowing up the Spanish Empire from within while assaulting it from without.[3] Following his assault on Buenos Aires, which was successful in its first phase, he despatched home a circular letter to the merchants of Liverpool and London telling them of the market opportunities he had opened up. He was at once acclaimed a hero. The government of Grenville was put in a dilemma. They did not want to open another front during the war against Napoleon

and his allies, and they resented naval officers making policy for ministers. But they also loved the applause of the mercantile and industrial interests. They arrived at a typical Whig compromise in circumstances like these; they court-martialled Popham and sent out reinforcements.

In Buenos Aires the supreme question was whether Britain intended to liberate Buenos Aires from Spain or establish British control. Beresford, the commander of the land forces, proclaimed a régime of free trade on a system preferential to British merchandise but open to all nations. This was agreeable to one of the growing interests in the community, the *estancieros* and the packers of dried meat. It was agreeable to some of the mercantile community. To this extent the British could hope for some support against the Spanish Viceroy, but Beresford made the mistake of requiring an oath of allegiance from the town authorities and he invited the public to come forward and swear similarly. This, of course, raised fundamental political questions. Apart from the town authorities, only 58 persons took the oath, and they, secretly.[4] The discordant elements in the Argentine community, the church and the liberals, those who wanted free trade and those who wanted to preserve restrictions, *estancieros* and poor gauchos and Indians, all drew together to form a united resistance to the British forces. Against this union neither military force nor political manœuvre was able to effect anything, and the British expeditionary force was obliged to capitulate and withdraw.

While these events were in process a new government had come to power in Britain. In May, 1807, Castlereagh presented to the new Cabinet a remarkable memorandum[5] which laid down the policy which Great Britain has followed with few deviations from that day to this in its relations with most of the States of Latin America. What, Castlereagh asked, is Britain's object in South America? " . . . the particular interest which we should be understood alone to propose to ourselves should be . . . the opening to our manufacturers of the markets of that great Continent." What of the means? " The question for the Cabinet to decide," Castlereagh wrote, " is whether some principle of acting more consonant to the sentiments and interests of the people of South America cannot be taken up, which, whilst it shall not involve us in any system of measures, which, on grounds of political morality, ought to be avoided, may relieve us from the hopeless task of conquering this extensive country against the temper of its population . . . In looking to any scheme for liberating South America, it seems indispensable that we should not present ourselves in any other light than as auxiliaries and protectors." Britain should be cautious and keep in mind that " in endeavouring to promote and combine the happiness of the people with the extension of our own commerce, we might, in

destroying a bad government, leave them without any government at all."

Here we have the brilliant germ of the idea of Dominion status; the realization that military occupation, administrative control and political interference in the affairs of other communities are unnecessary to the interest of Great Britain provided there exists in those communities the institutional means and the will to engage in an economic and financial relationship with Great Britain, advantageous to British investors and consumers of foodstuffs and raw materials. In a very real sense Argentina was the first community, substantially dependent economically on Great Britain, to achieve Dominion status.

Why did this happen? From the time of the first foundation of the Spanish Empire in America in the early sixteenth century the Spanish Crown and the Laws of the Indies had interposed obstacles to an economic connection between Great Britain and Central and South America. From Drake to the younger Pitt, British statesmen had contemplated the removal of these obstacles by violence. Diplomacy had, however, accomplished as much, perhaps more, than violence might have done; for, from 1604 onward, as the Spanish economy ran down towards decay, a series of treaties established a legal (and a cover for an illegal) way into the Spanish dominions for British goods and a way out for the bullion so indispensable to Great Britain in her commercial operations in the Far East.[6] But the economic revival of Spain in the last half of the eighteenth century had put a strain upon the long established commercial connection between Britain and Spain (and Portugal) while, at the same time, the expansion of British production, the improvement in British credit facilities and the perfection of British marketing techniques made British interests impatient with the complicated and narrow channels by which merchandise flowed to Seville and Cadiz and thence to the Americas.[7]

Until the economic reforms of Charles III in 1778, Buenos Aires was of little account. In the Empire until that time it was regarded as a military post closing the back door to Peru, where the Empire had its economic and political centre. The most developed parts of what is now modern Argentina were the interior provinces of Córdoba and Mendoza which supplied the mining areas of Alto Peru with food, mules, textiles and leather. The intendancy of Buenos Aires was a frontier region: poor, thinly peopled and lawless. They had nothing to occupy their time but praying, hunting and trading illegally with the occasional ship which appeared in the God-forsaken, muddy waters of the Plate estuary. The economy of the region was primitive. The Pampas of Argentina were treeless save for the solitary ombu here and there. Fuel and building

materials were, thus, lacking. More serious was the want of Indians upon the backs of whom the Spaniards elsewhere in the Americas had built their civilization. The Indians of the Pampas and Patagonia were fierce mounted hunters of cattle and horses who were hard to catch and harder to keep. Juan de Garay, who re-founded Buenos Aires in 1580, granted 64 *encomiendas* to his followers, but twenty years later not a single Indian *de servicio* existed in the region.[8] Negro slaves were introduced, but, as might be expected, they seem to have been absorbed into the plantations and shops of Córdoba and Mendoza where they could be employed at the production of commodities for commercial sale. The inhabitants of Buenos Aires, whether landowners, gauchos (i.e. white plainsmen who owned little or no land) and Indians were alike primitive hunters who lived on the flesh of wild cattle, clothed themselves (except for the woollen *poncho*) in their skins, made their rude furniture from their bones, and sold their hides whenever opportunity presented itself in order to supply themselves with woollen cloth, tobacco, metal wares and Paraguayan tea. In *The Purple Land* Hudson described life among the gauchos, but his picture, primitive as it is, in one of a condition much more advanced than that which existed before the late 1770's when Buenos Aires began to establish a direct legal connection with the ports of the Spanish Empire and to find better markets for hides and jerked (i.e. dried) beef.

After the opening of Buenos Aires as a port for direct trade with Spain and the Spanish Indies by the reforms of Charles III the price and volume exported of hides rose steadily from then until the close of the Napoleonic Wars.[9] At the same time bullion from Alto Peru flowed through Buenos Aires overseas, and this trade endowed Buenos Aires with a flourishing public revenue and steady surpluses in the public treasury.[10] Indeed, at this stage of Buenos Aires' development, the connection with the mining areas was more important to the city and its trading class than the activities of the immediate hinterland of the Pampas.

The purpose of thus describing the economic character of colonial Buenos Aires is to reveal the existence, in the shape of the *estancieros* and meat packers, of an important interest on the shores of the River Plate whose economic development, which was begun by widening markets, required a vaster opening of markets of the kind in which Great Britain was becoming increasingly interested by the late eighteenth century.

The shock administered to the community in Buenos Aires by the British invasion of 1806-07 precipitated the revolution. Not only did it reveal to the creoles that the Spanish Crown could not defend them, but that they could defend themselves. After the British withdrawal there was no longer any question of what relationship

with the mother country Spain would permit, but what relationship with Spain was agreeable to the colony. About this there was considerable disagreement, and out of this disagreement the first phase of the revolution developed. In this phase the critical question concerned trade policy. The régime which followed upon the expulsion of the British had adopted a liberal policy of permitting British and other foreign vessels to trade in Buenos Aires. When Cisneros, the new Viceroy from Spain arrived, the exclusive laws of the Spanish Crown were applied at first with leniency, but then with a growing vigour which, by the end of 1809, made it impossible for foreigners to own property or to do business with any but Spanish merchants. The export of gold and silver was absolutely forbidden, and payment for imports had to be taken in the form of the only other considerable export of the country—hides and tallow. In December Cisneros finally ordered all the British in Buenos Aires to withdraw. On 25th May, 1810, a Junta supported by the creole officers of the garrison declared Cisneros deposed, and, in the name of Ferdinand VII, they seized power. Three days later in response to a petition from the "*labradores y hacendados*" the prohibitions on trade were relaxed. Within a fortnight export duties on hides and tallow were reduced from 50% to 7½% and within six weeks the prohibition on the export of bullion was removed. By a bloodless revolution a native Argentine interest had effected a change which British arms had been unable to accomplish. In a public speech Captain Fabian of H.M.S. *Mutine* told the revolutionaries about the joy their actions would evoke in his native country.[11]

This first phase of the revolution was a relatively simple one. It was followed almost immediately by a social revolt which had been brewing at least since the onset of prosperity some thirty years before. The increase in the price and the demand for hides, meat and tallow converted cattle and horses from useful, but valueless, natural assets into commodities worth some energy to possess and to sell. The distinction between landlords, gauchos and Indians, who in old colonial times engaged in common activities and followed a common mode of life, now became apparent. In 1792 the formation of a guild of *estancieros* had been authorized by a Viceregal *auto*.[12] A system of registering cattle brands was established, and the marketing of unbranded hides was made illegal. Thus was the market reserved for the *estancieros* who possessed registered brands. After the revolution the branding of people as well as cattle was undertaken. A decree of 20th August, 1815, declared all plainsmen, not certified to be landowners by a justice of the peace, to be servants and ordered that they carry a paper signed by their employer and countersigned every three months by a justice of the peace. Failure to possess this passport rendered a man liable to outlawry and, upon

apprehension, to five years' service in the army.[13] Thus were all men without land compelled to enter the labour market. This process by which a body of purely undifferentiated hunters were being divided into employers and workers, property owners and propertyless gauchos, was one of the sources of the social revolt.

The other source of revolt was visible at the time of the revolution. Handicraftsmen producing for local and regional markets flourished in Spanish America. The Laws of the Indies had never aimed at the suppression of colonial industry in any systematic way, and the very restrictions placed upon trade across the ocean acted as a protection for local handicrafts. The Spaniards, indeed, like the Romans before them, had exported industrial and handicraft techniques rather than the products of industry. By the end of the eighteenth century there were, therefore, in South America many centres of handicraft production able and willing to resist the penetration of the market by foreign competitors. In answering the petition to open the ports to British commerce in 1809, the attorney of the commercial tribunal asked of the Viceroy: " What would become of the unhappy artisan who always merits the protection of an enlightened government? Is it not true that the shoemaker, the blacksmith, the carpenter, and a multitude of other artisans who honorably support many large families by the sweat of their brow would be compelled to shut their stores and to abandon their shops forever? It is a report only too common that a single one of the ships which we can see carries in its cargo nineteen thousand pairs of shoes . . . . What a calamity is this, Your Excellency, to the guild of shoemakers and to the tanners of every kind of hide or pelt."[14]

These two constituents of the social revolt manifest themselves everywhere on the Pampas. As one might expect, in a community so widely dispersed over a territory of half a million square miles and in a society at a low level of functional integration, this social revolt did not experience a uniform measure of success or failure. Paraguay, for example, established its political independence. Under the leadership of Dr. José de Francia it sealed itself off from the world save for that closely regulated trade necessary to supply the few wants unsupplied by Indian and Creole enterprise. Under the dictatorship of Francia agriculture and handicrafts, previously threatened with extinction, began to flourish.[15] Paraguay presented an extreme example of conservative handicraft and peasant resistance to foreign influence, but it was only an extreme variation of a trend which manifest itself in the interior provinces of Córdoba, Mendoza and Tucumán, sometimes in policies of protection applied through the Customs Houses in Buenos Aires.[16]

Uruguay witnessed the most prolonged success of the gaucho and Indian resistance to the landlord class. Under the leadership

of José Artigas the gauchos succeeded in destroying the power of Spain and overthrowing the authority of Buenos Aires and, for a time, in suppressing completely the class of property holders everywhere east of the River Paraguay. They destroyed not only the *estancias* of the landlords, but the heavy wagons they used for moving hides to market in order to preserve the primitive system of exploiting the herds.[17] The Protector of all the Free People was an able soldier and a brave, ruthless and consistent man who never sought to convert his power into personal riches and estate. He commands our respect, this simple soldier seated on an ox skull, eating beef off a spit, drinking gin out of a cowhorn and laughing about his empty money chest.[18] But he did not understand the economic forces of the society in which he lived, and he was incapable of organizing among his wild and barbarous companions a democratically supported economy in which the labourer controlled the full measure of his product. In his exile on a bush farm in Paraguay he depicted the tragedy of the popular conservative.

Looking back across the troubled years of Argentine history, we can see now what was then apparent to only a few men of exceptional insight viz. that a meaningful economic connection with the industrial communities of western Europe depended upon the structure of the internal politics of the states of the River Plate. There was an economic and a popular basis for conservative xenophobia in Argentina, not perhaps as strong but just as real as existed in Egypt, India or China. But in Argentina native elements succeeded in acquiring power, establishing labour discipline within the framework of a wage system, and creating a free, competitive market open to international commerce and finance. They did this in their own interest, in their own way and on their own terms. Foreign intervention in Argentina was not only impractical; it was unnecessary at any time between 1806 and 1914.

By 1820 the community of the River Plate had achieved that condition so much feared by Castlereagh: a complete absence of government. Suddenly out of the Hobbesian anarchy emerged a Benthamite authority. Martín Rodriguez was the head and Bernardino Rivadavia was the brain of this government. Rivadavia embraced the fallacy of rationality viz. that men are equally rational, equally self-interested and only need to see their rational necessities to embrace them. Indeed, upon taking office he wrote to Bentham to assure him that " je n'ai cessé de méditer vos principes en matière de législation; et à mon retour ici j'ai éprouvé une satisfaction bien grande en voyant les profondes racines qu'ils jettaient et l'ardeur de mes concitoyens á les adopter."[19] This piece of utilitarian self deception led Rivadavia to attempt to complete prematurely the integration of Argentina in the international competitive market.

A régime of free trade was inaugurated. A bank was established on the principles of the Bank of England. A fixed monetary standard was established. Land was nationalized and rented (often in enormous blocks).[20] The church was separated from the state, and education both stimulated and secularized. An attempt was made to pay interest on all public loans even those contracted by pre-revolutionary governments. A foreign loan with a face value of £1,000,000 (which realized £570,000 in cash) was floated in London. Immigration subsidized by the State was undertaken. Finally he negotiated a treaty of commerce and friendship with Great Britain. In his conception of Argentina's needs and the means of realizing them Rivadavia was a more ambitious anticipation of Gibbon Wakefield. By an interesting antithesis of conceptions he designed to create a *laisser faire* economy by the direction of an omnipotent state.

The treaty between Great Britain and the United Provinces of the Río de la Plata signed in February 1825,[21] established the legal foundations of Anglo-Argentine intercourse for more than a century. It is a simple document expressing parallelism of purposes and a joint resolve to maintain freedom of commercial activities, security for property and freedom of conscience for the subjects or citizens of each state in the dominions of the other. The Argentine was not bound, as Brazil was, to a policy of low tariffs; simply to a policy of treating British subjects, merchandise and services equally to the subjects etc. of other friendly powers.

The epoch of Rivadavia came to an abrupt end in 1828. The immediate occasion was the unsatisfactory peace negotiated with Brazil, but there were more profound reasons for his disappearance. His system had failed completely. The public loans were in default; the currency was inflated; the men who had rented the " nationalized " land refused to pay their rents; the church was opposed to liberal ideas. Looking back to that time and keeping in mind the subsequent behaviour of the Argentine landed interest, we can see why the utilitarian phase of the revolution passed so quickly and so completely. Had Rivadavia's system worked, the national income would have passed in increasing measure into the hands of the financial interests in Buenos Aires and abroad. The system of renting land established by Rivadavia's Law of Emphiteusis, had it worked, would have diverted a substantial portion of the *estancieros*' income into the coffers of the state to be dispersed to financiers in Buenos Aires and London or to rival employers of labour in the shape of subsidized immigrants who were to be given land for agricultural, not pastoral, purposes. Rivadavia's system of free trade was to the benefit of the *estancieros*, but they had to balance this advantage against the disadvantages of the control of finance by the state and the control of credit by bankers all of whom were merchants

and many of whom were foreigners. The men who had rented vast cattle ranges, from Rivadavia's government — the Anchorenas, the Viamonts, the Lezicas, the Velez, the Diaz — swung away from the urbanized, liberal régime and were found later firm in the ranks of the great gaucho *caudillo*, General Juan Manuel Rosas.

Rosas can legitimately be regarded as the architect of the Argentine power structure. He did not concern himself primarily with building a state apparatus. He built an army the purposes of which are plain at this distance. The army provided a heirarchical social framework theoretically embracing all persons, and in practice all persons not fitting in some way into the social system as an employer or a worker. It was the means of extending the frontier; of distributing land on heirarchical principles; of preserving the national independence and of helping gauchos everywhere in the republic to find a place in a society run by and in the interest of the *estancieros*. Rosas was a species of rich William Jennings Bryan; for he represented a social element rich in land but poor in capital. He adopted financial policies and techniques appropriate to the condition of his class i.e. a paper currency, low land rents, low taxes on property, and an inveterate hostility to banks. Indeed, he achieved the agrarian ideal of suppressing all banks.

The British merchants with an established interest in Argentina, and the Scottish and Irish sheep masters who came out during the 1830's and 1840's, found Rosas an agreeable enough politician. He kept order, he protected property and he made trade possible. Abroad, however, Rosas was not viewed in such a favourable light. During the 1840's an anti-Rosas literature was circulated in Great Britain, and the British mercantile community was persuaded, for example in 1844, that intervention in the affairs of the Río de la Plata was desirable.[22] The Committee of Spanish American Bondholders were active, lobbying both in London and Paris. In 1845, Lord Aberdeen briefly abandoned Castlereagh's policy of non-intervention, and permitted himself to collaborate with the French in an endeavour to free the Argentine blockade of the Río de la Plata, which was part of Rosas' military operations against Uruguay. Rosas refused to break off relations with Great Britain. He merely limited himself to driving the British gunboats out of the river and offering to make a token payment in the default loan of 1824.

The revolution which overthrew General Rosas in 1852 did not change the social structure of Argentina. General Urquiza, the conqueror of Rosas, was a great *estanciero*; he lived in Santa Fé whereas Rosas had operated in Buenos Aires. This was the difference between them. But the 1850's witnessed a silent revolution in the needs of the *estancieros*. Under Rosas the preservation and extension

of property and the maintenance of labour discipline among the few peons required to herd cattle and shepherd the flocks was sufficient to insure the well-being of the *estancieros*. But the world was moving on. Sheep farming, the breeding of cattle and sheep, the fencing of land required capital. The old costly method of transport in high wheeled wagons must yield to railways if Argentine produce was to continue to enter the world market. Between 1852, when Rosas was overthrown, and 1862, when General Mitre defeated the last resistance of the provincial elements, the thinking of the *estancieros* underwent a marked transformation. In 1853 the Committee of the Spanish American Bondholders renewed their importunities concerning the defaulted debt of 1824. The Foreign Office in London lent a sympathetic ear, but the authorities in Buenos Aires seemed stone deaf. For three years the finance minister in Buenos Aires evaded the issue or traded insults with the representative of the Bondholders. Finally Lord Clarendon, the British Foreign Secretary stated " that Her Majesty's Government would be perfectly justified in proceeding at once to the adoption of other and stronger measures for supporting and enforcing the rights of H.M. subjects."[23] Too much, however, can be attributed to this threat. Shortly after it was uttered a special representative of the House of Baring appeared on the scene, and after quiet negotiations secured an agreement completely unlike anything which had been offered in the course of diplomatic negotiations and better even than Barings themselves had expected to obtain.[24] The entire settlement smacks of a business deal rather than a political negotiation.[25]...It is interesting to note that Señor Norberto de la Riestra, the Argentine negotiator, became later the director resident in Buenos Aires of the first and most successful British bank in Argentina.

After the final unification of Argentina by General Mitre in 1862 the Argentine Congress laid the legislative basis for the influx of both foreign merchandise and capital. The national market was made uniform and as nearly free as the fiscal requirements of the state would permit. Railway legislation established the principle of state support for railway undertakings in the shape of guaranteed profits and land grants. The Law of 16th November, 1863, guaranteed payment in sterling in London of all public bonds unless it was otherwise stated in the instrument; a public record of all public debts was established and the public debts were declared a charge on all the public revenues. These laws, coupled with the material evidence of Argentina's capacity to pay exemplified by the resumption of payments on the defaulted Loan of 1824 (amounting to £977,000 in capital and £1,660,000 in defaulted interest), caused capital at once to start flowing to the River Plate. Within 10 years at least £23,000,000 had been raised in the London market for investment in Argentina.

During the depressed years after 1873, which were particularly severe in Argentina in 1875-1876, there was a revival of provincial xenophobia in Santa Fé province. A branch of the Bank of London and the River Plate was shut down by the authorities in order to make things easier for a local rival. British gunboats were ordered up the river to protect British lives and property. So long as the gunboats were in the river the bank did not open, but after they withdrew, the managing director of the Bank of London and the River Plate made a simple arrangement by which the Bank of London and the River Plate agreed, if allowed to reopen, to accept for deposit the depreciated notes of its local rival. The willingness of the English bank to accept the notes caused them at once to appreciate in value, and the episode ended happily for all concerned.

In the 1880's the increase in the British stake in Argentina was enormous. By 1890 the British investment was £174,000,000.[26] Then came the great Baring Crisis by comparison with which " 1866 would be a trifle." Argentina was now of such consequence in the British financial and economic empire that the functioning of its economy was capable of affecting the entire structure and course of British affairs. The rôle of the state in this great crisis is, therefore, extremely interesting. On the British side the Baring Crisis marks the beginning of the end of *laisser faire* capitalism.

It has been customary, following Dicey, to associate the end of *laisser faire* with policies designed to achieve a minimum of popular welfare; it is overlooked too often that the end of *laisser faire* was also related to finance and to market processes. In this instance Goschen, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, promised to underwrite the plan to bail out Baring's and prevent their bankruptcy. He was following a new principle, viz. that the power of the state would be employed to use the wealth of the whole community to sustain the fortunes of particular enterprises provided these enterprises were big enough (and badly enough run) to fail with a bang. When Goschen undertook to back the bankers, he appears to have accepted the suggestion of the Governor of the Bank of England " to work on the Argentine government about those discredited securities."[27] If the facts are what Sir John Clapham has suggested they are, the intention appears to have been for the British Government to back up the bankers on the one hand and on the other to put pressure on the Argentine government with a view to wringing sufficient out of the Argentine economy to keep Barings and the rest afloat. If this was the plan, it did not work.

There is no evidence in the records of the Foreign Office of a determination " to work on the Argentine government." Lord Salisbury was at this time the Foreign Secretary as well as Prime Minister. He stuck closely to Castlereagh's original policy of

non-interference. Goschen may have abandoned *laisser faire* at the Treasury, but at the Foreign Office Salisbury considered the numerous applications for assistance from various business interests in the light of the Treaty of 1825 and its interpretation by the Law Officers of the Crown. Their interpretation was invariably a strict one and, therefore, opposed to intervention in the affairs of the Argentine state.

The situation in 1891 was necessarily an alarming one from the point of view of the investing classes. A substantial part of the sterling debt of the Republic was in default. At the same time the Argentine Government was pursuing its traditional monetary policy of primitive Keynesianism.[28] This was at once frightening and incomprehensible in the City of London. As a result of the losses being experienced on the Stock Exchange and the anxieties occasioned by wild unorthodoxy in Buenos Aires, the Foreign Office was beset by many cries of " For God's sake, do something!" One banking house, which had marketed Argentine securities for some years and was probably hearing from disturbed curates and fox hunters in the shires, " respectfully ventured to enquire if Her Majesty's Government would be disposed to enquire through the accredited Minister, if the Government of the Argentine Republic would receive a special Delegate or Envoy, selected by and having the confidence of Her Majesty's Government with a view to enquiring into the interests of British capital at stake, into the condition of the country, and in consultation with its authorities to formulate some broad scheme for the adjustment of the finances of the country with due regard to the various interests involved."[29]

Lord Salisbury did not reply personally to this suggestion, but he may as well have done, for he scattered across the draft amendments and notes designed to underline the final point of the letter signed by a secretary that " the Minister (of the British Government in Buenos Aires) could not, with a due regard to British interests, take the initiative in proposing to the Argentine Government such an interference with their internal affairs as the appointment of a Special Delegate or Envoy would necessarily involve."[30]

At this time a much bolder suggestion was made to the Foreign Office which its author apparently considered so delicate that it could not be expressed on paper. A certain banker accompanied by an expert adviser with Argentine experience attended at the Foreign Office in July 1891, where he was seen by the Permanent Under Secretary. The suggestion made was simple and drastic; for Great Britain to consult with the Great Powers about an intervention in Argentina for the purpose of setting up a Provisional Government. " The United States should be asked but would probably be unable to undertake it." The inference was that Britain should conduct the intervention.

" I pointed out," the Permanent Under Secretary reported to Salisbury, " the manifest difficulties or impossibilities of the course suggested. He was an earnest and respectable man; but had only looked at the matter from one point of view."[31] Salisbury's only comment on the report was written in red ink: " Dreams!"

Salisbury had a lively appreciation of the fact that other Great Powers existed in the world and a strong dislike of interfering in the affairs of other nations especially in the interest of capitalists who, by all the current theories of political economy, were supposed to know what they were doing. He was succeeded at the Foreign Office in August 1892, by Rosebery, a politician of quite another stripe. How this plutocratic imperialist would have responded to complaints about Argentina, had they continued to pour in, we cannot say. The fact is that the volume of complaints began to diminish by the time Rosebery came to the Foreign Office. This diminution was related to the course of economic development in Argentina. The momentary inflation in Argentina cut real wages, maintained a high level of employment (although it led to an exodus of people) and seems to have been a factor in the tremendous growth of output in 1892 and after.[32] Argentine wheat, meat, linseed and wool flooded into the world market in increasing volume, and Argentine net receipts, at least in the British market, mounted even more rapidly than the volume of goods sold. The expansion of the Argentine economy by the characteristic Argentine device of monetary manipulation resolved the Baring Crisis in spite of Lord Rothschild and his committee. The increase of cash receipts made possible the payment of those obligations which were written in sterling, and even made it possible for various agents of the Argentine provincial as well as federal governments to re-negotiate their loans at lower interest rates and to abolish the evil system of guaranteed railway profits.

The years between the resolution of the Baring Crisis and the outbreak of World War I witnessed a renewal and heavy increase of the British equity in Argentina. No documentary evidence concerning Anglo-Argentine relations is available after 1902, but the external signs suggest that the traditional relationship involving a low degree of political tension persisted. On the other hand there is evidence of growing political tension within Argentina, not of critical volume, perhaps, but of sufficient intensity to shift the formal, if not the real, centre of political gravity in the direction of parliamentary democracy.

Is it possible to elicit from the history of Anglo-Argentine relations between 1806 and 1914 an " explanation " of the low degree of political tension we have emphasized as a characteristic of the politico-economic connection? It seems apparent that the class

of *estancieros*, whose economic interests fitted into the developing pattern of British economy of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, were able to control the social situation in their community and to build the social economic and political structure which made possible productivity of the kind required. It seems plain enough that at several stages of the historical development of Argentina the economy might have been forced into a different pattern than that which actually developed, but that the class of *estancieros* were able at every critical point to exert their will and to lead Argentina peacefully step by step into closer relations with the advanced industrial nations of Western Europe. While they did this they maintained their independence and served their own interests with a skill and a sophistication which Europeans did not altogether appreciate or fathom. In examining the financial operations of the Argentine community it is interesting to observe, for example, how previous obligations payable in sterling were invariably payable from the wealth of the whole community (e.g. government bonds, guaranteed railway profits and various forms of debentures) but the obligations specifically of the *estancieros* (e.g. *cédulas* or land mortgage bonds) were written in Argentine pesos, and automatically scaled down in real value by currency manipulation. How much European capitalists lost in *cedulas* is beyond calculation, but we do know that the debt-ridden landlords of the Pampas were able to build imitation feudal castles where once there had been great annual slaughters of wild cattle and to match these with palaces in the Avenue Kléber.

University of Birmingham. *H. S. Ferns.*

NOTES

[1] F.O. 6/420, Memorandum of the Permanent Under Secretary to the Marquis of Salisbury, July, 1891.

[2] *Accounts and Papers*, 1850, XXV, p. 4.

[3] *Minutes of a Court Martial . . . for the trial of Captain Sir Home Popham.* (London, 1807).

[4] J. Street, *British Influence in the Independence of the River Plate Provinces.* (unpublished Ph.D. thesis in the Library of Cambridge University, 1950), p. 34.

[5] *Correspondence Despatches and other Papers of Viscount Castlereagh*, (London, 1851), vii, p. 319 ff.

[6] J. O. McLachlan, *Trade and Peace with Old Spain*, 1667-1750. (Cambridge, 1940).

[7] A. Christelow, " Great Britain and the Trades from Cadiz and Lisbon to Spanish America and Brazil, 1759-1783," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 1947, p. 1 ff.

[8] A. F. Zimmerman, " The Land Policy of Argentina with Particular Reference to the Conquest of the Southern Pampas," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 1943, p. 3.

[9] E. A. Coni, *Contribución a la Historia del Gaucho*, (Beunos Aires), 1937), p. 48.
[10] *Documentos para la Historia Argentina*, V, (Buenos Aires, 1915, p. LIII.
[11] Street, *op. cit.* p. 133.
[12] *Documentos para la Historia Argentina*, IV, (Buenos Aires, 1914), p. 140.
[13] J. Alvarez, *Estudios sobre las Guerras Civiles Argentinas*, (Buenos Aires, 1914), p. 99.
[14] Quoted in R. Levene, (translated by W. S. Robertson) *A History of Argentina*, (Chapel Hill, 1937), p. 112.
[15] Rengger and Longchamps, *The Reign of Doctor Joseph Gaspard Roderick de Francia in Paraguay*, (London, 1827), p. 48,
[16] M. Burgin, *Economic Aspects of Argentine Federalism*, (Cambridge, U.S.A., 1947), Chap. V, for an excellent description of the provincial economy.
[17] J. P. and W. P. Robertson, *Letters on South America* (London, 1841) i, p. 64.
[18] J. P. and W. P. Robertson, *Letters on Paraguay* (London, 1839), iii, p. 102.
[19] British Museum, Add. MSS. 33545, fr. 596-7 quoted in R. A. Humphreys, *British Consular Report on the Trade and Politics Latin America*, 1824-26 (Camden Third Series, Vol. LXIII, London 1940), p. 9, Note 1.
[20] E. A. Coni, *La Verdad sobre la Emfiteusis de Rivadavia.* (Buenos Aires, 1927), pp. 24-29.
[21] L. Hertslet, *A Complete Collection of the Treaties and Conventions at present subsisting between Great Britain and Foreign Powers*; vol. iii (London, 1841), p. 44 ff.
[22] J. F. Cady, *Foreign intervention in the Rio de la Plata*, (Philadelphia, 1924), pp. 122-123.
[23] F.O. 6/193 Clarendon to Parish, 8th November, 1856.
[24] F.O. 6/201, White (the representative of Barings) to Christie, 27th September, 1857.
[25] I have described the entire negotiation in " The Establishment of the British Investment in Argentina," *Inter-American Economic Affairs*, vol. 5, No. 2 (1951) pp. 71-78.
[26] This estimate is based, after considerable correction and revision, upon an estimate made by Arthur Herbert, Commercial Secretary of H.B.M. Legation in Buenos Aires printed in *Accounts and Papers*, 1892, LXXXI, 92-3.
[27] J. H. Clapham, *The Bank of England, A History* (Cambridge, 1944), ii, p. 329.
[28] It is a matter of interest that Silvio Gesell, whom Lord Keynes regarded as a great seminal mind in the field of economic science, was a businessman in Argentina during the Baring crisis and its resolution.
[29] F.O. 6/420, 6th August, 1891.
[30] *supra*, 11th August, 1891.
[31] *supra*, Memorandum of 24th July, 1891.
[32] J. H. Williams, *Argentine International Trade Under Inconvertible Paper Money*, (Cambridge, U.S.A., P, 1921).

Communication

I have read (and re-read) with much interest John Morris' article on the relation of early Christianity to the social background of the Roman Empire. I find some points extremely well put — for example, the importance of Paul's Roman citizenship and the social position which that implies; the contrasting contributions to Christianity of the political quietism reflected in the Pauline Epistles and the revolutionary yearnings represented by the Apocalypse; the important role of Irenaeus. I hope John Morris will one day give us a fuller history of a revolution of which the true story has never yet been told.

But to see primitive Christianity in perspective we must assess the documentary evidence at its proper value. This, I submit, is not done in the article. Morris thinks, for example, that " the substance " of the Acts of the Apostles was written near the date when its narrative closes — that is, near the time of Paul's imprisonment at Rome in the reign of Nero. From this dating Morris infers that the story told in the Acts was believed in Jerusalem about 58 A.D. If so, the Acts are a document of enormous historical importance; and as such Morris treats them.

But is it so? The Acts are the second volume of a work of which the first volume is the Gospel of Luke. If the Acts were written under Nero, Luke's Gospel cannot be dated later, and Mark, on which much of Luke is based, must be earlier still. The historical importance which Morris attaches to the Acts would then equally attach to Mark's and Luke's Gospels. Yet this cannot be what Morris means; for he says that the Gospels " did not receive their present form before the years 120-140." Presumably he holds that, while the substance of Luke-Acts dates from Nero's reign, the work was interpolated and given its present form between 120 and 140. But if so, what becomes of the validity of the Acts in their present form as evidence of the belief of Christians in Jerusalem about 58? Apart from these considerations, the nature of the narrative of the Acts, starting with the physical ascension of Christ into heaven and punctuated by miraculous gifts of tongues, cures, killings and escapes from prison, surely discounts it as history and stamps it as romance. An exception may be made in favour of journey-narratives written in the first person, which it is difficult to believe were invented. But further than this we can hardly go.

Morris finds that the narrative of the Acts agrees with the narrative deduced from the Epistles except for " insignificant chronological difficulties." I am afraid the difficulties are more than chronological and far from insignificant. In the Epistles Paul stresses again and again that the gospel which he preaches is the product of a special revelation to himself, that he owes nothing to the Jewish Christian Church, that his contacts with them have been occasional only, that for years after his conversion he was " unknown " to them " by face." He bitterly anathematises the preachers of " another gospel " and leaves us in no doubt that he means the Jewish Christian leaders (2 Cor. 10-11, Gal. 1-2). In the Acts, on the contrary, Paul after his conversion works in close conjunction and in complete harmony with the Jewish Christians. A few nameless people try to make trouble between Jewish and Gentile converts, but are disposed of at a single conference (Acts 15). There is no squaring the two accounts and no escape from the conclusion that the writer of the Acts is trying to hush up what had been a bitter and prolonged conflict. It is impossible not to connect this conflict with the contradiction, which Morris rightly recognises, between the revolutionary dreams of the Jewish Church and Paul's injunction of submission to Rome.

In view of this it can hardly be maintained that " Pauline Christianity took its stand on a root and branch opposition to the established organisation of society." I fail to see any root and branch opposition, for example, in Romans 13. Unquestionably there were Christians who looked for " cataclysmic revolution "; but was Paul one? His characteristic contribution to the subject is the dictum that " flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God," and the consequent removal of the " kingdom " to a region above the clouds or beyond the grave. Compare and contrast this with the " new heaven and new *earth* " of the Apocalypse.

Morris' theory here seems incompatible with the statement, with which I cordially agree, that, but for the revolutionary and anti-Pauline tradition of Jewish Christianity (represented by the Apocalypse and the Epistle of James) with which later Church leaders had to reckon, " Christianity might have shrunk to a philosophy of the leisured class, an inoffensive neo-Stoicism." The key to the history of early Christianity and to its alternating persecution and toleration by Roman emperors down to Diocletian is to be sought, I submit, in the contradictory elements of Jewish militancy and Pauline mysticism (the ideologies of different social strata) which went to its making.

Oxford. *Archibald Robertson.*

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